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THE WISDOM AND GENIUS

OF

EDMUND BURKE.

THE
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OF
EDMUND BURKE.



Bust of Edmund Burke by Baker's scul.

LONDON
EDWARD Moxon, DOVER STREET
1845.

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THE
WISDOM AND GENIUS

OF

THE RIGHT HON.

EDMUND BURKE,

ILLUSTRATED IN A SERIES OF EXTRACTS FROM HIS WRITINGS
AND SPEECHES ;

WITH

A SUMMARY OF HIS LIFE :

BY

PETER BURKE, Esq.,

OF THE INNER TEMPLE, BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

" Here lies our good Edmund, whose genius was such."
GOLDSMITH.



LONDON :

EDWARD MOXON, DOVER STREET.

MDCCLXV.

LONDON :
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PREFACE.

EDMUND BURKE is more frequently cited than any other political author, and at no time so often as at the present day. There scarcely passes a public meeting, or a debate in either house of parliament, where, to sustain the argument, or to round the period, recourse is not had to those thoughts of wisdom, and words of fire, which emanated in such rich profusion from this master-spirit of reason and eloquence. Yet, strange to say, the works of Edmund Burke are not generally read. The knowledge of them appears to be confined to the orator or politician: others, though ever ready to admire and applaud Burke's brilliant passages when quoted, seldom themselves visit the actual store of his rhetorical opulence. The evident cause of the neglect is this—the portions of the writings and speeches of Edmund Burke, which must delight every reader,

are often combined with a quantity of matter of temporary interest only—with a mass, in fact, of political, financial, and statistical detail which the public or parliamentary business of the moment required. Unless the reader has some particular object in view, his mind hesitates to encounter this formidable obstacle to its gratification. The precious gems lie in the heap it is true, but the labour and perseverance of the diamond seeker can alone arrive at their possession.

The present volume proposes to relieve this embarrassment by giving, under a systematic arrangement, the finer part of the works of Burke. The plan adopted is a classification into chapters of the different subjects which principally occupied the great statesman's attention ; and a formation under each chapter, of a connected series of extracts the most remarkable for eloquence, argument, or style. The whole, with the biographical summary annexed, displays a concise, and, it is submitted, a clear view of what was the luminous course of Burke's action and thought—what were his parliamentary and literary powers.

To effect the intended object, nearly all Burke's

productions have been laid under contribution. The two principal instances of omission are his earliest essay, "A Vindication of Natural Society," a piece of continued irony which will not permit of separation or curtailment; and the "Thoughts and Details on Scarcity," a paper, the excellence of which mainly depends on the unity of the whole. One other exception also occurs. Nothing, beyond a few observations, is taken from the correspondence of Edmund Burke, lately brought out by Earl Fitzwilliam, and Lieutenant-General Sir Richard Bourke. Due consideration must be paid to the very recent publication of those letters; and, in truth, they form altogether so agreeable and attractive a collection, that they do not come within the reason which has led to this volume's appearance. The care and ability devoted to their production reflect high credit on the editors—the one, the representative of a magnificent line, and the son of that great and good man, Burke's truest and dearest friend,—the other, Burke's relative, a soldier of distinction, who, as Governor of New South Wales, has, in a distant quarter of the globe, established and enlarged the reputation of his race.





THE WISDOM AND GENIUS

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Bust of Edmund Burke by "Cocker" 51

LONDON
EDWARD MOXON, DODDER STREET
1843

anecdote describes him revisiting the place in the days of his greatness, and gratifying the pride of his quondam pedagogue by a cordial and affectionate recognition. Near the spot stood the ruins of Spencer the poet's castle—a circumstance which in after life tended powerfully to confirm Mr. Burke's early attachment to the locality. From Castletown Roche he returned to Dublin, but did not long stay there, as his health further declined: his father therefore resolved that the whole of his boyhood should pass in the country, and sent him to the academy of Ballitore, a village in the county of Kildare, about thirty miles south of Dublin. This school, always one of considerable and deserved repute, was then conducted by an excellent and learned Quaker, Abraham Shackleton. Young Burke was at that time in his twelfth year. With the son of the master, Richard Shackleton, who afterwards became master himself, Edmund formed a friendship of the warmest kind; it lasted through the whole of life, neither chilled by time, nor weakened by distance, nor even by the immeasurable interval in point of station and pursuits, which Burke's genius and fame placed between them. Boyish intimacies, the result generally of accident rather than knowledge of character, are seldom durable; not so with this. Through all the statesman's illustrious career, his early and humble ally found him still the same, still preserving, amid the applauses of the senate and the admiration of the world, an undiminished relish for the society of the friend of his childhood. Affectionate correspondence and mutual visits passed between them till Mr. Shackleton's decease in 1792; and, after that event, Mr. Burke continued his inti-

macy with the Shackletons, until his own death. One of his very last letters was addressed to the daughter of his friend, Mrs. Mary Leadbeater; her affecting answer is to be found in the correspondence recently published by Lord Fitzwilliam and Sir Richard Bourke, and the reader is referred to it as a production fully worthy of a lady who, inheriting the talent of her family, obtained public favour herself as an author, and won the approbation of another genius of Ireland, Maria Edgeworth, a name like that of Edmund Burke, of never fading reputation.

At Mr. Shackleton's school, Burke is said to have displayed little of that splendour and originality of mind which afterwards distinguished him so eminently; indeed, some of his peculiarities were such as are generally supposed dissociated from lofty intellect. A patient assiduity, a tenacious memory, and an unrivalled facility of acquisition, appear to have been his chief attributes in his early years. Towards the middle of April, 1744, having been just three years at the school, he quitted it, and the day after doing so, he entered Trinity College, Dublin, as a pensioner. He passed through the usual routine of a University education with credit, and nothing more. He took the degree of B.A. in 1748, and M.A. in 1751: he was presented with the further degree of LL.D., in 1791. Having been always designed for the English bar, his name was entered at the Middle Temple so early as 1747. In 1750 he arrived in London to keep terms. Burke, while in London, studied with his accustomed ardour and diligence; but it has been rightly conjectured that his pursuits were somewhat too excursive to permit him to obtain a very profound knowledge of the law; not to men-

tion that his health, still delicate, demanded frequent relaxation. From one or other of these causes, or more probably from both, he soon abandoned altogether the profession to which he had been destined; a step not agreeable to, or sanctioned by, his father. The knowledge he had obtained, however, was respectable, and of considerable use to him in after life; while the discipline which his legal studies afforded, exerted a most beneficial influence on the general character of his mind.

The earliest attempts of Burke were poetic, and of more than ordinary promise; but he subsequently devoted himself to prose compositions alone. There is abundant reason to believe that at this period of his student life, he wrote much and frequently for the various periodicals of the day. His first avowed work, the "Vindication of Natural Society," came out in 1756. This pamphlet may be termed a piece of philosophical criticism, couched under the guise of serious irony. The design of its author was to produce a covert mimicry both of the style and principles of Lord Bolingbroke, and particularly by pushing those opinions to their ultimate results, to force conviction on the mind of the reader, of their unsoundness, by showing that the arguments employed by the noble writer against religion, applied as strongly against every other institution of civilized men. The attempt proved eminently successful, the imitation being deemed so perfect, as to constitute identity rather than resemblance. A few months afterwards, in the same year, appeared his celebrated essay, "A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful." The severe application which this

publication demanded injured his health, and compelled him to seek repose. For that purpose he visited Bath and Bristol, where he soon recovered. At Bath he was attended by his countryman, Dr. Christopher Nugent, an eminent physician. This amiable man invited Mr. Burke to his house, where he remained till the re-establishment of his health; and the consequence of the visit was an attachment between Burke and the daughter of his kind host—Miss Jane Mary Nugent. The guest (his income depending on what his father supplied) offered her nearly all he had at that time to present—his hand and heart, which were accepted. This union proved a source of comfort ever after. The lady well deserved Burke's affections. To considerable endowments of intellect she added the utmost amiability of disposition: proud of her conquest over such a man, proud of his genius, and still prouder of his love, she made him the object of almost idolatrous attachment; and to the promotion of his happiness she dedicated her whole life. Invaluable to him was the acquisition of such a companion; never did man need more than he a sanctuary, and a refuge in the quiet of domestic bliss from the incessant agitation of his public life; a spot of inviolable security, round which the storm of politics might roar and bluster, but never enter. Such was his home, justifying his own strong and beautiful language, that "every care vanished the moment he entered beneath his own roof." He himself fully felt and acknowledged his wife's surpassing worth, as appears by the terms in which he ever spoke of her, and the agony of care with which he watched over her during frequent periods of ill health, the result of her delicate constitution.

In 1757 appeared, in two volumes octavo, "An Account of the European Settlements in America," a work of disputed authorship, but attributed generally, and on good grounds, to Mr. Burke. The publication of a new edition of the "Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful," so overcame the parental displeasure at Burke's abandoning the legal profession, that, on presenting his father with a copy, he received a substantial proof of reconciliation in a remittance of one hundred pounds. From this Essay Burke became universally known and admired; his company was courted by men of letters and distinction—among them Goldsmith, Lord Littleton, Arthur Murphy, and Sir Joshua Reynolds. The Colossus of English literature himself also sought the acquaintance and friendship of the author of the "Sublime and Beautiful." Dr. Johnson declared that Burke was the greatest man living, and that if a stranger were driven to take shelter from a shower of rain under the same gateway with him, he must, in a few minutes' conversation, perceive his superiority over common men. Murphy says Johnson would from Burke bear contradiction, which he would tolerate from no other person. In 1764, Reynolds and Burke originated the LITERARY CLUB, at the Turk's Head, Gerrard Street, Soho. They and Johnson were its most distinguished members; its history brings into association all the great names that adorned that Augustan period of learning and genius.

In 1757, Burke commenced his "Essay towards an Abridgement of English History;" eight sheets were printed by Dodsley, but the work was thrown aside from some cause or other, probably because Hume had entered into a similar undertaking.

In January, 1758, was born his son, Richard, that child of many hopes and many sorrows, to be through life beloved with excessive fondness, and to be mourned in death with even more than parental agony and affliction. This was Burke's only offspring, with the exception of another son, who, born about two years afterwards, died in infancy.

The prospects of a family rousing the energies of Burke's mind to still greater exertion, he, about this time, commenced the "Annual Register," and continued, for some years after its establishment, to be connected with that excellent and deservedly popular political and literary history of the times.

The day of Burke's political fame now approached. The amiable, accomplished, and patriotic Lord Charlemont, whose name carries Ireland's greatness in its echo, was the man who first introduced him to the attention of those in power. This nobleman recommended Burke to the Right Hon. William Gerard Hamilton, well known as "Single-Speech Hamilton," who, in 1761, had been appointed Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. Hamilton engaged Burke to assist him in Ireland; and the latter actively, and, no doubt, usefully, employed himself in the service of the government, though without any ostensible office or any salary. In 1763, Burke received a pension, on the Irish establishment, of £300 per annum, for which he was indebted principally to Mr. Hamilton. He enjoyed it, however, only for two years; it appears its payment inferred implicit political obedience. Burke was not the man for this: his lofty spirit did no such fealty to Mammon. The instant he became fully aware of the intentions of his employers, he

spurned the ignominy and relinquished the pension. Mr. Hamilton, who managed the matter in the true spirit of a political huckster, had the meanness to take the pension back. The whole transaction, the entire particulars of which have only recently transpired, redounds to Mr. Burke's high and unbending honour.

In 1765 a section of the Whigs—the aristocratic portion of that party—entered office under the auspices of the Marquis of Rockingham. One week after that nobleman became First Lord of the Treasury, he appointed Burke his Private Secretary, and the latter, through the interest of Lord Verney, entered parliament as Member for Wendover. The Rockingham administration, it is well known, came into power under very critical circumstances. In America, discontent had spread to an alarming degree in consequence of the Stamp Act: at home, the manufacturers and merchants were incensed at restrictions which threatened to destroy their trade. At this momentous period, the parliamentary session opened, January the 14th, 1766, and on a very early day, Burke delivered his first speech, with America for the theme. Though little of this effort now remains, it is evident from the commendations of Mr. Pitt, who followed him in the debate, that it must have exhibited no ordinary excellence. After this Burke spoke frequently, and each time with increasing effect. His parliamentary reputation had indeed no slow dawning, no lengthened rise; it burst at once into full and lasting splendour. Johnson himself has left it on record, “that probably no man at his first appearance ever obtained so much reputation before.”

The most important measure on which the Rockingham party resolved was that which respected

America, one well known to every reader of English history. They repealed the Stamp Act on the ground of *expediency*, but asserted the *legislative* power of Great Britain to enforce it, if she thought proper. This was a middle course between the two extreme parties, one of which denied the right of England to tax the colonies at all, while the other not only maintained that right, but insisted on its being exercised. The government measure bears conclusive internal evidence of having chiefly been the work of Mr. Burke. It carries the very stamp of his policy. His principle was always to apply a practical remedy to a practical grievance, and never to discuss abstract principles, or, at all events, not before the most imperious necessity compelled such course. The measure answered its purpose; and had the plan it recognised been adhered to, North America might long have remained to Britain. Several other ministerial proposals passed this session, the most popular of which was *the resolution against general warrants*. Under the provisions of this act, Mr. Wilkes returned from banishment.

Parliament was prorogued in June, and in July the ministry were dismissed. Mr. Burke soon after drew up that masterly sketch, entitled, "A Short Account of a late Short Administration;" in which he simply stated, in a few paragraphs, what the government had done during its year of office. On the dissolution of the Rockingham Administration, Mr. Pitt, afterwards Lord Chatham, attempted to combine a new one out of the elements of all political parties, and he produced in consequence that memorable "piece of joinery,"* some years afterwards

* See p. 266.

so happily described by Mr. Burke. This ministry subsequently received an accession of strength from the Bedford party, terminating in what is usually called the Grafton Administration, whose proceedings respecting Wilkes gave rise to the Letters of Junius. Among the many persons to whom the public has attributed the authorship of that famous epistolary work, Burke has been frequently mentioned; but, laying aside the little proof brought forward to maintain the supposition, the question is, as regards him, completely set at rest by his own statement; for, be it remembered, Burke was a man of unalterable truth: one might safely hazard even life upon his faith. In a letter addressed to Charles Townshend, bearing date the 24th Nov., 1771, to be found in the recently published correspondence before alluded to, Burke writes thus: "I have, I dare say, to nine-tenths of my acquaintance, denied my being the author of 'Junius,' or having any knowledge of the author, as often as the thing was mentioned, whether in jest or earnest, in style of disapprobation or of compliment. Perhaps I may have omitted to do so to you, in any formal manner, as not supposing you to have any suspicion of me. *I now give you my word and honour that I am not the author of 'Junius,' and that I know not the author of that paper, and I do authorise you to say so.*"

In the year 1768 Mr. Burke purchased an estate in Buckinghamshire, called Gregories, or Butler's Court, situated about a mile from the market town of Beaconsfield, and latterly itself better known by the name of "Beaconsfield" only.

The funds necessary for this acquisition he derived partially from money left him by his father and elder

brother, then dead ; and partially through the aid of his patron, the Marquis of Rockingham, who considered it little more than a just return for the faithful and indefatigable services of his secretary. At Beaconsfield, Burke cultivated his lands with great care and attention : he took infinite pleasure in agriculture, and he proved himself to be one of the most successful farmers in the county. Here too used he to entertain with cordial and frequent hospitality his friends and admirers. Butler's Court was the continual resort of beauty, wit, or talent, led thither by the fascinating society of the owner and his family. In private company Burke was a delightful associate : he had extraordinary powers of conversation on all matters, grave or gay, important or trivial ; he abounded in humour and pleasantry ; he took an interest in every one, and every thing ; and there was scarce a subject of which he did not evince a perfect knowledge. He felt much enjoyment in female society, and with ladies his manners were graceful, amusing, and playful. At home, and among his associates, politics were readily laid aside ; and various anecdotes represent the statesman entering with zest into the sports and pranks of the witty crowd that surrounded him ; sharing earnestly in the games of schoolboys ; and even listening in the company of children, with serious attention, to fairy adventures and infantine histories. Add to this the pure mind, and unimpeachable moral character of the man, and no wonder that Beaconsfield formed a centre of attraction. But the place is rendered sacred by even nobler recollections : it was on all occasions, the refuge of misery and distress. To the assistance Edmund Burke afforded in hours of poverty and

embarrassment, England owes a painter and a poet, Barry and Crabbe. Burke sent Barry to Italy at his own expense, and maintained him through many difficulties. To Crabbe he was of still greater service: the poet while in London, in straightened circumstances and without friends, conceived the happy thought of writing and sending a specimen of his talents to Beaconsfield. The reply and the relief were instantaneous; and under his great patron's fostering care, the author of "The Borough," and the "Tales of the Hall," rose from obscurity, and made the opportunity the means of fame and independence. Nor can it be forgotten, that at Beaconsfield, the priests and laymen who had escaped from the terrors of the French revolution were received with open arms; that Burke, with all his energy and eloquence, raised subscriptions for those unhappy sufferers; that he induced the government to form a school in his neighbourhood for the education of the children of refugees; and that, even in the last sorrowful hours of his life, he never relinquished his attention to the comfort and prosperity of that establishment. These deeds, more than his greatness, speak to his eternal honour; and make one easily accord with Abraham Shackleton, the son of his early friend, who, when Burke was near his death, wrote to him thus: "the memory of Edmund Burke's philanthropic virtues will outlive the period when his shining political talents will cease to act. New fashions of political sentiment will exist; but philanthropy—*immortale manet.*"

Abraham Shackleton's sister, the talented Mrs. Leadbeater, before-mentioned, wrote, when a girl, a poem descriptive of the mansion at Beaconsfield and

its owner : the following lines are from the introduction :—

All hail, ye woods, in deepest gloom array'd !
 Admit a stranger through your reverend shade,
 With timid step to seek the fair retreat,
 Where Virtue and where Genius fix their seat :
 In vain retiring from the public gaze,
 Not deepest shades can veil so bright a blaze.
 Lo ! there the mansion stands in princely pride ;
 The beauteous wings extend on either side ;
 Unsocial pomp flies from the cheerful gate,
 Where hospitality delights to wait ;
 A brighter grace her candid smile bestows
 Than the majestic pillars' comely rows.
 Enter these ever-open doors, and find
 All that can strike the eye, or charm the mind :
 Painting and sculpture there their pride display,
 And splendid chambers deck'd in rich array.
 But these are not the honours of the dome
 Where Burke resides, and strangers find a home ;
 To whose glad hearth the social virtues move,
 Paternal fondness, and connubial love,
 Benevolence unwearied, friendship true,
 And wit unforced, and converse ever new,
 And manners, where the polished court we trace,
 Combined with artless nature's noble grace.

* * * *

When the sad voice of indigence he hears,
 And pain and sickness eloquent in tears—
 Forsakes the festive board, with pitying eyes,
 Mingles the healing draught,* and sickness flies ;
 Or, if the mind be torn with deep distress,
 Seeks, with kind care, the grievance to redress—
 This, this is Edmund Burke—and this his creed—
 This is sublime and beautiful indeed.

* This is an allusion to Burke's possession of a slight knowledge of practical medicine, which enabled him to administer relief not only to his servants and family, but to his poorer neighbours in the country, when they were unable to pay for more regular advice, or too distant to procure it immediately.

The parliamentary session of 1768 opened in perplexities. America, agitated from one extremity to the other, assumed a tone of remonstrance fast strengthening into defiance. This topic, more especially the flagrant injustice of summoning Americans to England for trial, furnished Mr. Burke with matter of frequent and powerful invective. Unable any longer to carry on the government, Lord Chatham resigned. At this critical moment Wilkes again appeared on the stage, and against the influence of both court and legislature gained the election for Middlesex. His consequent prosecution gave rise to disgraceful riots. Burke, while he disapproved of Wilkes' conduct, exerted himself to the utmost to defeat the unconstitutional methods adopted to crush him.

Mr. Grenville at this period either wrote, or caused to be written, a pamphlet, "The Present State of the Nation;" an elaborate defence of the Earl of Bute's measures and his own. Mr. Burke replied, in his "Observations on a late Pamphlet, entitled, 'The Present State of the Nation.'" In 1770 he published the "Thoughts on the Present Discontents."

Although on the eve of the American war, the ministry, still obstinately devoted to their policy, adopted the most rash measures against the state of Massachusetts. Mr. Burke, almost alone, steadily opposed them. He took a leading part in the Grenville Election Bill, the Quebec Bill, and several others that affected America. But his most splendid effort was his harangue in favour of Mr. Fuller's motion for repealing the tea-duty. It equals in beauty any piece of oratory Mr. Burke ever composed; and in nerve and force, in all the essentials of

powerful eloquence, surpasses most of them. This is the speech on "American Taxation," the first he could be prevailed on to publish.

In the summer of 1772, Burke visited the continent, and there saw the beautiful but ill-fated Maria Antoinette, whose charms and accomplishments made a lasting impression on his mind.

On the dissolution of parliament, in 1774, a difference with Lord Verney excluding Burke from Wendover, he was elected for Malton, in Yorkshire. Malton, however, had not then the honour of being so represented; for just as the election had terminated, a deputation from Bristol arrived with the flattering invitation to become a candidate for that city. Burke immediately decided; threw himself into a post-chaise, and by travelling night and day with incredible speed, in about four-and-forty hours reached Bristol. Without resting a moment, he repaired to the Guildhall, and addressed a powerful speech to the electors. He had been nominated at a late period, and the canvass of his opponents had already far advanced; yet, nothing daunted, he ventured on the contest, which continued to the very last moment. It terminated in his favour. In returning thanks for his election, he took an opportunity of entering largely into the mutual duties of representatives and their constituents.

The "Boston Port" measures produced, as predicted, the most disastrous results. They exasperated the spirit of all America; they necessitated defence; and they led to the establishment of Congress; thus giving unity and concentration to the hitherto vague and wavering spirit of hostility. The ministry in this embarrassing position, gave powerful

testimony to Burke's far-sighted wisdom, though too late. Lord Chatham now consented to adopt the DECLARATORY ACT. Abundant evidence, given at the bar of the house, also proved that America would have rested tranquil, had the policy of the Rockingham administration been adhered to.

In the session of 1775, Mr. Burke introduced his famous propositions on the subject of "American Conciliation." This is the most elaborate of his speeches on the subject of America, and one of the most powerful he ever delivered. In it he went somewhat further than he had as yet done, though he still cautiously avoided the question of right, and contented himself with denying altogether the possible expediency of taxing America. The time had arrived, in his opinion, when something *more* was necessary for the tranquillisation of the colony, than the abandonment of a tax. The Americans would formerly have accepted that compromise; they would now be satisfied with it no longer. They demanded a pledge against the possible recurrence of the system. His defence of this advance on his old position was, that *a great change of circumstances demanded a change of policy*. The whole harangue teems with important principles, adorned and enforced with the prodigal illustrations of his fancy. Mr. Fox said of it, "Let gentlemen read this speech by day, and meditate upon it by night; let them peruse it again and again, study it, imprint it on their minds, impress it on their hearts—they would there learn that representation was the sovereign remedy for every evil."

Burke's eloquent warnings, however, poured forth in vain. The infatuated ministry had no ear for the

modern Cassandra. Hostilities, in fact, had already commenced at Lexington, at Concord, and at Bunker's Hill; and, General Washington had taken the command of the colonial forces.

In the following session, the haughty tone of the address again called Burke to offer a strong but ineffectual protest against an obstinate appeal to force in the disputes with America. Nor did he stop here; five weeks afterwards he brought forward a *second* scheme of conciliation with America, founded on the statute of Edward I., *de tallagio non concedendo*. This speech is said to have been a wonderful effort of oratory, but scarcely a vestige of it remains.

His efforts were of no avail; the ministry still persevered. Petitions and remonstrances from merchants, both at home and abroad, met with a sort of ostentation of neglect, which at length provoked Mr. Burke to move a resolution in the shape of a taunt, to the effect, that, "The house knowing all things relative to America, needed no further information."

Thus, finding their efforts to oppose the obstinacy of ministers ineffectual, Lord Rockingham's party determined to absent themselves from parliament, and no longer endure the humiliation of seeing measures passed which they believed fraught with calamities to the country, and to which they could offer no availing resistance. Two addresses, one to the king and the other to the colonies, were drawn up in explanation of their conduct by Mr. Burke. This unprecedented policy was not persisted in. It, however, called forth Burke's eloquent letter to the "Sheriffs of Bristol."

The attempt to remove certain heavy restrictions on the trade of Ireland, met with the approbation and support of Burke. But the narrow spirit of Bristol, jealous for its commercial interests, took alarm. Burke, however, resolved to preserve his independence, though at the expense of his popularity. He accordingly persisted in his course; and in consequence, his patriotism cost him much of the favour of his constituency. He defended his conduct in "Two letters to Gentlemen of Bristol, on the Bills relative to the Trade of Ireland."

Nor in this point only did he give umbrage to his constituents. As narrow-minded in their general policy as they were selfish in their commerce, the people of Bristol could not sympathise with his support of Sir George Saville's bill for the relief of the Catholics. The state of things, however, at Bristol, met a counterbalance in the conduct of Dublin, which, in the ardour of gratitude and admiration, proposed a statue to his honour.

At this period an occurrence took place which proved Burke's constancy in friendship. Admiral Keppel had fought an indecisive action with the French fleet. For this he had to appear before a court-martial. Mr. Burke who had long felt for him the warmest friendship, attended the gallant seaman throughout the anxious scene of his trial at Portsmouth; cheered and encouraged him; and report says, aided in preparing his defence.

In 1780, Mr. Burke displayed his eloquence and his extensive knowledge in another effort. Taxes had increased in proportion to the expenses of a costly and ruinous war, and the people at length became clamorous for redress. Mr. Burke under-

took the arduous task of constructing a measure on this subject: hence his speech on "Economical Reform."

The chief points this speech embraced were an abolition of all the inferior royal jurisdictions, of an immense number of useless offices in the royal household, of some of the civil departments of the mint and the ordnance, of the patent offices of the exchequer; the regulation of the army, navy, and pension pay-offices; and a new adjustment of the civil list.

Applause unbounded this oration obtained, but the project shared the usual fate of opposition measures, and at that time fell to the ground.

After the melancholy riots stirred up by Lord George Gordon, Mr. Burke, while urging condign punishment on the principal offenders, evinced great humanity in exerting himself to procure pardon for the subordinate agents. About the same time he drew up the heads of the plan for the abolition of the slave-trade. It became impracticable, however, then to bring it forward. The great achievement remained for Wilberforce.

On the dissolution of parliament in the autumn of 1780, when Mr. Burke repaired to Bristol, he found his constituents in no very propitious mood. Their prejudices, duly inflamed by the industry of his opponents, had poisoned their minds against him. Resolved, however, that he would neither abandon the contest, if a reasonable prospect of success remained, nor persist in it merely for the sake of opposition, he called a meeting at the Guildhall on the 6th of September, to enable him to form an opinion of the issue of an election. On this occasion, he defended himself at great length from the charges which had been

brought against him. The principal seemed to be that he had not visited the city so frequently as he ought; in other words, that he had not practised with sufficient assiduity the common artifices for gaining popular favour. He had preferred serving his constituents to flattering them. The other objections were to his support of the Insolvent Debtors' Bill, the Irish Trade Acts, and the relief granted to the Catholics. On all these questions, his speech breathes the spirit of manly independence and a sustaining consciousness of integrity.

Finding it, however, essentially necessary to retire from the contest, he sought Malton once more; and for this place he sat during the remainder of his parliamentary career.

In March, 1782, the ministry resigned, and the Rockingham party again entered office. The province which in this change fell to Burke was the paymastership of the forces, and a seat in the privy council. Burke proved as active in office as in opposition. His "Economical Reform Bill," though curtailed of some of its proportions (sacrifices which he was compelled to make to propitiate the lords), passed both houses, while his own office became subjected to thorough alteration, not more extensive than judicious. This demanded and obtained such sacrifice on his own part as rendered it difficult which most to admire, the genius which could devise, or the disinterestedness which could effect. Certain perquisites of his office, amounting nearly to 1000*l.* a year, he threw into the public treasury. The ministry had hardly time to arrange their plans when Lord Rockingham suddenly died. Lord Shelburne succeeding, several of the ministry,

and Burke amongst them, resigned. On the subsequent formation by Mr. Fox and Lord North, of the much blamed Coalition administration, Burke once more became paymaster.

This ministry, led by Mr. Fox, framed the famous "India Bill," to correct the gross misgovernment of the British Indian Empire, which had again and again roused the indignation of parliament. In support of this measure, Burke delivered that speech which, in his works, goes under the name of the "Speech on Mr. Fox's India Bill."

The bill passed the house of commons; but the king exerted all his secret influence to procure its defeat in the lords. It was accordingly rejected; ministers summarily dismissed from office; while the youthful but ambitious Pitt succeeded to the premiership. A strange and fearful struggle now ensued between the royal will, which had fixed on Mr. Pitt, and the house of commons who were as determined on thwarting it. This hard-fought political struggle was maintained by the minister with a cool courage and perseverance almost incredible. Constantly disgraced and out-voted, he still kept his ground; till after numberless defeats his pertinacity met with success. The opposition majority, which had once been fifty-four, at length broke down to one. At this critical moment Mr. Pitt advised the daring measure of dissolving parliament: his success was signal; no less than 160 members of the old parliament being thrown out.

In April, 1784, the University of Glasgow elected Burke Lord Rector; and repeated the honour in the following November. He was installed amidst a splendid assemblage of all the principal literati of

the North. About this period he paid his last visit to Dr. Johnson, then on his death-bed. On this occasion, the Doctor tendered a most touching tribute to the conversational powers of his friend.—“I fear,” said Burke, “the presence of strangers is oppressive to you.” “No, sir,” was the reply, “it is not so: and I must be in a wretched condition indeed, when *your* company would not be a delight to me.”

The session of 1785 found Mr. Burke still foremost in opposition. He resisted with spirit the ministerial proposals for a sinking fund, as well as those respecting Ireland. But India now became the scene which was to occupy, for many years, Burke’s untiring eloquence. On the twenty-eighth of February, he delivered his celebrated speech on the Nabob of Arcot’s debts. This, however, was but prelude and preparation for those more gigantic efforts, which he afterwards made to expose to the people of England the whole system of our eastern tyranny, and to obtain, if possible, a severe but salutary exercise of retributive justice.

In 1786 he moved for the prosecution of Governor-General Warren Hastings. Despite of all obstacles Mr. Burke entered fearlessly upon the almost desperate enterprise of this accusation. By his persevering eloquence he gradually won over the nation to his views, and even forced the minister, who had previously betrayed partiality for the accused, to maintain a rigid neutrality. The conduct of the trial of Hastings was committed, by the house of commons, to a body of managers, the chief of whom were Burke, Fox, and Sheridan, and the first of these the animating soul of all.¹ In the session of 1786, Burke declared his intention to proceed by impeach-

ment: and in the session of 1787-8, the trial commenced in Westminster Hall, in the presence of almost all that was august and imposing in the empire.

Never did eloquence so delight the ear as on this occasion. The greatest orators of an age of oratorical splendour exerted themselves to the utmost. Burke, Fox, Sheridan, Windham, followed each other in apparently endless succession, and, to use the striking language of Mr. Erskine, "shook the walls of Westminster Hall with anathemas of superhuman eloquence." Mr. Burke never spoke with such transcendent effect as on this memorable occasion.—The description of the enormities of DEBI SING,* one of the worst agents of Indian tyranny, excited a thrill of ungovernable horror and suppressed mutters of execration through the whole assembly, while many of the female part of the audience fainted. Even the sternness of Lord Thurlow was for a moment melted, and he observed, in reference to the effect of the speech, that "their lordships all knew the effect upon the auditors, many of whom had not to that moment, and, perhaps, never would, recover from the shock it had occasioned." Owing to a variety of causes, but to nothing more than the sheer weariness of the national mind from the length of the trial, Hastings was acquitted in 1795, and he stands *legally* absolved. It is for posterity to judge of the existence and extent of his offences. The firmest conviction of his guilt remained on Mr. Burke's mind to the end of his life.

In the autumn of 1788 the alarming state of the king's health forced the Regency question on the attention of Parliament. Burke opposed Mr. Pitt on this measure with continued wit, sarcasm, argu-

* See p. 117.

ment, and ridicule. The rapid improvement of the royal invalid at the end of February 1789, rendered it unnecessary to pursue the unhappy topic further.

The closing and most conspicuous scene of Mr. Burke's political career now approached—the year 1790, and the French revolution—the period when, to use his own metaphorical language, his splendid orb went down, and left the western horizon in a blaze with his descending glory. The great convulsion in France had amazed and stupified mankind. An ancient and powerful nation rose suddenly from a state of oppression to one of the wildest freedom. In the neighbouring countries the multitude, who looked no deeper than the surface, applauded: many even among the wisest, and the best yielded to the popular feeling. Charles James Fox, whose gallant, generous mind worshipped liberty in every shape and every clime, surrendered himself entirely to this apparent consecration of his idol. When the plot thickened, and horrors accumulated upon horrors, men still stood bewildered, and knew not what to do. But from the very first, the prophetic eye of Edmund Burke went beyond ordinary mortal vision, penetrated the outward covering, and perceived the danger that lurked beneath. Irreligion, anarchy, cruelty, and mob-dominion, and beyond that again the dread fury of conquest and aggrandisement that had seized the French and threatened the slavery of Europe—he saw it all, and he addressed the civilised world in a voice of thunder. The recollection of the loss of British America sanctified his warning: the people dared no longer hesitate to hear him, and the continental struggle commenced. Yet in the beginning there was no energy, and Pitt himself showed

vacillation in an undertaking so terrible. Burke alone grew more animated as the difficulty increased. Louder and louder did he proclaim, "Let there be no compact or alliance with revolutionary France!—war upon the regicide!" until his expiring voice had roused his country and the nations that depended upon her to continue a contest, which, as he foretold, happily ended in victory, security, and peace.

In the beginning of February 1790, Mr. Fox took occasion, in the debates on the army estimates, to give unequivocal utterance to his admiration of the French Revolution, and was lavish in praise of those very points which were considered in England of most dubious character. These sentiments met with strong censure from several persons, but from none more than from Mr. Burke, who no longer hesitated to reprobate the whole Revolution in the strongest language. At an earlier stage, Mr. Pitt had been surprised into feelings somewhat favourable to its progress; he now, however, renounced all sympathy with it, and expressed admiration of Mr. Burke's speech. Mr. Fox's reply to Mr. Burke was calm. It contained the memorable acknowledgment, that "he had gained more by the conversation of Mr. Burke, than by all other men and books put together;" and it even acknowledged that his speech on this very occasion, "with the exception of a few observations, was one of the wisest and most brilliant flights of oratory ever delivered in that house."

Mr. Burke now produced that book, which, as a literary effort at least, went far to eclipse the fame of his previous productions,—the work was the "Reflections on the Revolution in France."

Throughout the greater part of the year 1790 he was perpetually employed upon this celebrated performance, and he laboured at it with his accustomed ardour and diligence. It appeared in the month of November 1790. The circulation of the book corresponded with its fame. Not less than thirty thousand copies were disposed of within a year of its publication, a sale unprecedented; for at that time the demands on literature were considerably less than at the present day. Nor was its celebrity confined to England. M. Dupont, the friend of Burke, translated it into French, and extended its reputation to the greater part of civilized Europe. Even monarchs condescended to read and patronise a book, which promised to be an effectual safeguard to their thrones. The Emperor of Germany, the Princes of the House of Bourbon, Catherine of Russia, Stanislaus of Poland, George the Third, all expressed their approbation to the author, or gave him presents still more flattering. Trinity College, Dublin, the University of Oxford, and numberless distinguished individuals both at home and abroad, were equally loud in their praises. "I shall take care," said Erskine, "to put Mr. Burke's work on the French Revolution into the hands of those whose principles are left to my formation. I shall take care that they have the advantage of doing, in the regular progression of youthful studies, what I have done even in the short intervals of laborious life; that they shall transcribe, with their own hands, from all the works of this most extraordinary person, and from the last among the rest, the soundest truths of religion; the justest principles of morals, inculcated and rendered delightful by the most sublime eloquence;

the highest reach of philosophy, brought down to the level of common minds, by the most captivating taste; the most enlightened observations on history, and the most copious collection of useful maxims from the experience of common life."

The "Reflections" provoked innumerable replies. The most celebrated of these were the "Vindiciæ Gallicæ" of Sir James Macintosh, by far the ablest of them all. Tom Paine responded in "The Rights of Man."

The gentleman to whom the "Reflections" were addressed having written a short letter in answer, Mr. Burke was induced to publish his "Letter to a Member of the National Assembly," in which he enforces and illustrates the arguments contained in the "Reflections." Soon after followed a pamphlet, entitled "Hints for a Memorial to M. de Montmorin." It had for object the mediation of the British government between the French monarch and his people. The negotiation contemplated the concession of a free constitution to the French.

A complete alienation between Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke was now at hand, in consequence of their difference of opinion on the French Revolution. This unhappy dispute gradually progressed in the warmth of public debate. Their final quarrel took place in the House of Commons, on the 28th December, 1791. On that memorable occasion, Mr. Burke's horror of the French Revolution led him into an act of egregious bad taste. After mentioning that he understood that 3000 daggers had been ordered from Birmingham, he drew one from under his coat, and exclaiming, "This is what you are to gain by an

alliance with France ; this is your fraternisation," he threw it on the floor. At the close of his speech, addressing himself to Mr. Fox, he exclaimed, " My right honourable friend no more." No sooner had he said this, than he darted across the House and seated himself by the side of Mr. Pitt, on the ministerial benches. Burke, however right in political principle, is certainly to be blamed for this violence and for his subsequent persevering, and, for him, unusual animosity against his former friend.

To justify his opinions, Mr. Burke, in 1791, published his " Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs ;" and soon after he put forth a paper, under the title of " Thoughts on French Affairs." The principles it designed to enforce, are these,—that no internal cause would produce a counter-revolution in France ; that the system would strengthen the longer it continued ; and that so long as it existed, it would be the interest of France to disturb and distract all foreign governments.

He once more also exerted himself on behalf of the Irish Catholics, against the severity of the penal laws. On this occasion he wrote the first letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe. The Bill soon after introduced into the Irish parliament, conferred upon the Catholics the privileges of practising law, intermarrying with protestants, together with several other important advantages, in connection with education and commerce ; and, at length, the elective franchise.

In the midst of parliamentary duties, Mr. Burke did not forget France for an instant. It absorbed his time and his thoughts. In November he drew up " Heads for Consideration on the Present State of Affairs," purposing to excite war, and to show that

no country in Europe could successfully battle with France unaided by England. He exhibited great diligence in obtaining information of the state of France. He even sent his son to the French princes, staying at Coblenz. On his return, he brought over M. Cazales, a member of the National Assembly, distinguished as the opponent of Mirabeau. By his son's efforts he also opened a correspondence with some of the ministers of Austria and Prussia.

In November, 1793, Mr. Burke published another piece on his exhaustless theme, French affairs. It was entitled, "Remarks on the Policy of the Allies." It attributed the disasters of the war to want of combination and energy on the part of the allies, to mutual jealousies, to cowardice in some, and secret love of revolutionary principles in others. He also wrote a preface to a Mr. William Bourke's Translation of Brissot's Address to his Constituents, which contains a brilliant and masterly sketch of the Brissotin and Robespierre faction. In the house, Mr. Burke scarcely spoke at all till quite towards the close of the session.

The parliament, the last in which he sat, broke up in July, 1794. Soon after, the Duke of Portland's party joined the ministry, a step which was strongly urged by Mr. Burke, and mainly effected by his mediation.

The darkest hour of Mr. Burke's life drew nigh; a calamity awaited him which did more to paralyze his energies and to hasten his death than all the agitating conflicts and labours of his past life put together. This was the death of that only and beloved son, from whom he had hoped so much; to whom he looked as

the stay and solace of his declining age, and as the heir not only of his fame, but of a fame still brighter than his own. Young Burke possessed much to justify parental affection. He had talents excellent in themselves, and assiduously cultivated. His knowledge was extensive, for his studies were directed, and his mind formed, under his father, a man himself of boundless information—a man whose most casual conversation was rich with instruction—a man, too, who believed that almost everything might be accomplished by industry, and who was the mortal enemy to those great allies of ignorance,—sloth and dissipation ! To this the son added amiability of disposition and devotedness to his parents. These *real* accomplishments, and *real* excellences, the father's ardent imagination had decked out in celestial colours and ideal graces, and on this picture of imaginary perfection his fancy had been accustomed to delight for years. No wonder that he watched with intense anxiety the opening of this fair flower, or that he felt with overwhelming anguish the rude stroke that laid its young beauty in the dust.

It appears that exactly when the fatal symptoms of his son's last illness disclosed themselves, Mr. Burke had relinquished to him his seat for Malton, and had even procured for him the appointment of secretary to Lord Fitzwilliam, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Dazzled by the bright scenes which his hopes had conjured up, he could not see, what every one else perceived plainly enough, that the days of his son were numbered. Of this he was totally unconscious, and no one dared to tell him. Dr. Brocklesby, the physician of the family, declared from his long knowledge of the intensity of Burke's

affection, that any such disclosure would probably be fatal, and brief as was the term of the son's existence would render that of the father still shorter.

Young Burke was removed to Cromwell House, near Brompton, for the sake of the country air. The unhappy father, who still never thought of danger, selected for him this residence near town, that he might be ready to depart for Ireland at a moment's notice, as soon as his health permitted. Here, however, all the symptoms rapidly grew worse, and the physician, no longer able to disguise the truth, disclosed the horrors of the case just a week before its fatal termination. From this moment, Burke abandoned himself to the desperation of sorrow; "his was a grief which would not be comforted."

Young Burke passed the night before his dissolution in much pain and restlessness. Early in the morning, he heard the voice of sorrow in the adjoining apartment, where his parents had spent a night of yet deeper wretchedness. Anxious to alleviate their affliction, he resolved, if possible, to delude them, by an affectionate deceit, into the belief that he was stronger than he really was. Rising with some difficulty, he requested to be supported to the door of the apartment in which his father and mother were sitting. There he dismissed his attendants, and, making a last effort, walked twice or thrice across the room. But his parents were not to be deceived, and they looked on in silent agony. Finding his efforts to console them vain, "Speak to me, my dear father," said he, "speak to me of religion, speak to me of morality, speak to me of indifferent matters, for I derive much satisfaction

from all you say." Hearing the wind whistling through the trees, he was reminded of the words of Milton :

"His praise, ye winds, that from four quarters blow,
Breathe soft or loud ; and wave your tops, ye pines,
With every plant, in sign of worship wave."

These lines he repeated twice : he had just strength to say them the second time, when, exhausted by the effort, he staggered across the room and fell in a state of insensibility into his father's arms ; shortly after which he expired. The event took place on the 2nd of May, 1794.

The grief of Burke was appalling ; he would sit in that unnatural calmness of despair more terrific than the most stormy display of passion ; then bursting into a frenzy, he would rush into the chamber where his son lay, and throwing himself on the body, call in accents of fearful anguish for " the hope of his age, the stay of his life, the only comfort of his declining and now joyless years." He was prevailed upon after the first day, though with some difficulty, to consent that he would see the corpse no more ; a promise which he kept. The mother was equally distracted ; to Mr. Burke's frequent efforts to get her away from the room, her only reply was, " No, Edmund, while *he* remains there, I will remain." At length, however, her husband prevailed.

Sir Joshua Reynolds had painted an admirable portrait of young Burke. This, Burke ordered to be engraved, with the following inscription from Dryden's poem of *Eleonora*—

" As precious gums are not for common fire,
They but perfume the temple and expire ;
So was he soon exhaled and vanish'd hence,
A short sweet odour at a vast expense."

Underneath these lines were the words,

“ O dolor atque decus.”

One would think that such a stroke as this should have utterly unfitted Burke for politics. The only wonder is that he ever recovered his elasticity of mind sufficiently to enter into that scene again. He found it, however, the only means left of weaning him from the perilous indulgence of solitary grief.

In 1795 he wrote his letter on the Catholic Question, addressed to W. Smith, Esq., in reply to one from that correspondent. It contains an admirable discussion of all the chief topics connected with the subject. A letter on the same subject to Sir Hercules Langrishe (the second to that gentleman) soon followed. His sarcastic letter to William Elliot, Esq., in defence of his conduct against the attacks of the minority, was his next publication. Another paper, written about the same time, displayed his extensive knowledge of the minutest facts connected with the state of the country, and presented the most enlightened principles of political economy. This was his “Thoughts and Details on Scarcity,” addressed to Mr. Pitt. In 1795, Burke received a pension from government. This grant, which he had neither directly nor indirectly solicited, originated, it is said, in the express wish of King George III. The manner in which the bounty came, formed, however, no object of consideration with his political opponents. They vehemently attacked his acceptance of a favour, which really had more of justice than benevolence in it. Worn out as he was in the service of the commonweal, no man in his days of sickness and

sorrow had stronger claims upon the public. He had deserved that reward by a long series of acts that tended to the general good; by his personal disinterestedness on many occasions; by surrendering a large income, as his perquisites from the pay-office; by his economical Reform Bill, which for the twelve preceeding years had saved the country nearly £80,000 annually in hard money, as well as extinguished a source which might have been converted to undue parliamentary influence; by the reformation of the pay-office, in guarding against the serious deficits so frequently experienced there, and rendering available to the government about a million sterling, the frequent amount of the balance in hand; by a whole life, in fact, devoted to bettering the condition of the state, and increasing the resources and prosperity of the empire. Against the effusions of irritation, rather than of good sense, good feeling, or sound argument, that emanated from his adversaries, Mr. Burke had to place his own political course of unsullied purity, and the example of numerous other eminent men of all parties, Lord Chatham among the rest, who had not disdained a similar honourable recognition of their abilities and conduct. In answer to the Duke of Bedford, one of those who cast reflections upon him, he wrote his celebrated "Letter to a Noble Lord in Defence of his Pension." His ultimate publications were his "Letters on a Regicide Peace;" called forth by the disasters of the war, and intended to animate to renewed exertions the drooping spirit of the nation; and last of all came another "Letter on the affairs of Ireland." He was the first who, when others hardly

gave the subject a thought, boldly and loudly addressed the parliament of England on the misrule and misery in Ireland, calling upon the commons to redress her grievances and to relieve her suffering people. His exertions in this cause he never relaxed. Ireland he brought forward at every opportunity; and in his expiring thoughts and language Ireland was present again.

Grief and toil at length broke down energies which at one time equalled almost any measure of human endurance or exertion. As often happens when strength had been long overtaken, Burke sank almost at once into the last stage of corporal debility and prostration: his mind, however, shone out in all its lustre even to the last, unsmothered amidst the falling ruins of the body.

Finding medical skill unavailing, he repaired in the spring of 1797 to Bath, for the benefit of the waters. He remained there four months, but without any material improvement of health. At length, despairing of a change for the better, he resolved on a removal to Beaconsfield. "It is so far at least" said he, "on my way to the tomb, and I may as well travel it alive as dead." He again thus expressed himself to Mrs. Leadbeater, "I have been at Bath these four months to no purpose, and am therefore to be removed to my own house at Beaconsfield tomorrow, to be nearer to a habitation more permanent, humbly and fearfully hoping, that my better part may find a better mansion."

To Beaconsfield, therefore, where he had enjoyed so many of the honours, the affections, and the comforts of life, he returned to die. Another month,

and the event occurred. A presentiment almost of the moment of his final summons seemed to have prevailed with him; for he employed several of the previous hours in sending messages of tender remembrance to absent friends; in expressing his forgiveness of all who had in any manner injured or offended him, and in requesting the same from all whom his general or particular infirmities had offended. He recapitulated his motives of action in great public emergencies, and told his thoughts on the then alarming state of the country—"the ruling passion strong in death:"—he gave a few private directions connected with his approaching decease, and afterwards listened attentively to the perusal, by his own desire, of some serious papers of Addison on religious subjects, and on the immortality of the soul. These duties finished, his attendants, with Mr. Nagle of the War Office, a relation, were conveying him to his bed, when, indistinctly articulating a blessing on those around him, he sunk down, and after a momentary struggle expired, on the 9th July, 1797, in the sixty-eighth year of his age. He was interred on the 15th of the same month; a large concourse of men of high rank and official station attended the funeral; the pall had for supporters the Dukes of Portland and Devonshire, the Lord Chancellor, the Speaker of the House of Commons, Earl Fitzwilliam, the Earl of Inchequin, Sir G. Elliot and Mr. Windham. Mr. Fox had proposed in parliament, that he should be interred with public honours in Westminster Abbey: the tenor of Burke's will, however, rendered this impracticable. In accordance with his own direction, he was buried in Beaconsfield Church,

in the same grave with his brother and his son: a tablet in the south aisle of the church bears the following inscription:

NEAR THIS PLACE LIES INTERRED ALL
THAT WAS MORTAL OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE EDMUND BURKE,

WHO DIED ON THE 9TH OF JULY, 1797, AGED 68 YEARS:
IN THE SAME GRAVE ARE DEPOSITED THE REMAINS OF HIS ONLY SON,

RICHARD BURKE, Esq.,

REPRESENTATIVE IN PARLIAMENT FOR THE BOROUGH OF MALTON,
WHO DIED THE 2ND AUGUST, 1794, AGED 35:
OF HIS BROTHER,

RICHARD BURKE, Esq.,

BARRISTER-AT-LAW, AND RECORDER OF THE CITY OF BRISTOL,
WHO DIED ON THE 4TH FEBRUARY, 1794:
AND OF HIS WIDOW,

JANE MARY BURKE,

WHO DIED ON THE 2ND APRIL, 1812, AGED 78.

Such was the unsullied life, and such the dignified departure of Edmund Burke — orator, statesman, writer, patriot, philanthropist — admirable; husband, father, relative, friend — admirable also. His conduct without vice; his bearing, gallant, unaffected, and courteous; his mind potent in the acquisition of all knowledge, and continually ready to impart it; his spirit inflexible in integrity, and intolerant of oppression; his heart copious in affections public and private, and his soul devoted to religion — with such attributes this great man realised, more than any other personage in history, a combination of the heroic qualities of classic Greece and Rome, with whatever was beautiful in the chivalry of modern and Christian Europe. That Burke always cherished this country, and her happy constitution with the

ardour and freshness of a bridal love, his whole existence passed in her service, sufficiently attests: that his views and his policy were right, subsequent events now make indisputable: and there can be as little doubt, that the verdure of gratitude will decorate his memory, whilst this nation, its right feelings and its prosperity endure. "His immortality," said Grattan, "is that which is common to Cicero or to Bacon, —that which can never be interrupted while there exists the beauty of order, or the love of virtue, and which can fear no death except what barbarity may impose on the globe."

Of Mr. Burke's immediate family, none survived himself, but his widow, and his niece, Mrs. Haviland and her son. Mrs. Burke continued until her demise the 2d April, 1812, to reside at Butler's Court, visited and esteemed by all the friends of her late husband. Mrs. Haviland was the only daughter of Mr. Burke's only sister, Juliana, wife of William French Esq., of Loughrea, in the county of Galway. Mrs. Haviland espoused in 1792, Colonel Thomas Haviland, who was the only son of General William Haviland, of Penn in Buckinghamshire, near Beaconsfield, and who died shortly after the marriage. The sole issue of this union was a son, who on the decease of his mother, in March 1816, became the lineal representative of the family: he has assumed the name and arms of his grand-uncle, and is the present Thomas Haviland Burke, Esq., of Lincoln's Inn, Barrister-at-law.

A word or two about Beaconsfield, and this narrative concludes. The residence of Butler's Court, after Mrs. Burke's death, was let to a clergyman named Jones, for the purposes of a school, and, while in his occupation, it was burnt down, on the morning

of the 23d April, 1813. In the century previous to the time of Burke, his lands at Beaconsfield had formed a portion of the estate of another Edmund—the poet Waller, who, although a slippery politician, was a bard of fair repute. Here, returning from exile, Waller terminated his days in retirement, amid the recollections of his blighted ambition, and his bygone love for Sacharissa, and the other aristocratic objects of his poetic affections. Lipscomb, in his History of the County of Buckingham, thus describes Beaconsfield whilst in Burke's possession:—"The diversified combination of woods, hills, valleys, and beautiful enclosures by which the residence of Burke assumed a resemblance of Chilton, Wotton, Cliefden; and the splendid colonnades which gave it, at a little distance, the dignity of a royal residence in miniature, by its similitude to Queen Charlotte's palace, called Buckingham House, in St. James' Park, together with the magic name of Burke, rendered it an object of very general curiosity." There is now scarcely a vestige of the place—nothing, indeed, remains but the lasting halo of its departed greatness.

THE WISDOM AND GENIUS
OF
THE RIGHT HON. EDMUND BURKE.

CHAPTER I.

THE SOVEREIGN, THE PARLIAMENT, AND THE BRITISH
CONSTITUTION.

“ We thought ourself thy lawful king :
And if we be, how dare thy joints forget
To pay their awful duty to our presence ?
If we be not, show us the hand of God
That hath dismissed us from our stewardship :
For well we know, no hand of blood and bone
Can gripe the sacred handle of our sceptre,
Unless he do profane, steal, or usurp.”—SHAKESPEARE.

“ Law, and form, and due proportion,
Showing, as in a model, our firm estate.”—DITTO.

THE SOVEREIGN.

THE SOVEREIGN OF GREAT BRITAIN'S RIGHT OF
SUCCESSION AND TITLE TO THE CROWN.—His
(Dr. Price's) doctrines affect our constitution in its
vital parts. He tells the Revolution Society, in this
political sermon, that his majesty “is almost the *only*
lawful king in the world, because the *only* one who
owes his crown to *the choice of his people.*”

This doctrine, as applied to the prince now on the

British throne, either is nonsense, and therefore neither true nor false, or it affirms a most unfounded, dangerous, illegal, and unconstitutional, position. According to this spiritual doctor of politics, if his majesty does not owe his crown to the choice of his people, he is no *lawful king*. Now nothing can be more untrue than that the crown of this kingdom is so held by his majesty. Therefore if you follow their rule, the king of Great Britain, who most certainly does not owe his high office to any form of popular election, is in no respect better than the rest of the gang of usurpers, who reign, or rather rob, all over the face of this our miserable world, without any sort of right or title to the allegiance of their people. . . .

When they say the king owes his crown to the choice of his people, and is therefore the only lawful sovereign in the world, they will perhaps tell us they mean to say no more than that some of the king's predecessors have been called to the throne by some sort of choice; and therefore he owes his crown to the choice of his people. Thus, by a miserable subterfuge, they hope to render their proposition safe, by rendering it nugatory. They are welcome to the asylum they seek for their offence, since they take refuge in their folly. For, if you admit this interpretation, how does their idea of election differ from our idea of inheritance? And how does the settlement of the crown in the Brunswick line derived from James the First come to legalise our monarchy, rather than that of any of the neighbouring countries? At some time or other, to be sure, all the beginners of dynasties were chosen by those who called them to govern. There is ground enough for the opinion that all the kingdoms of Europe were, at

remote period, elective, with more or fewer limitations in the objects of choice. But whatever kings might have been here, or elsewhere, a thousand years ago, or in whatever manner the ruling dynasties of England or France may have begun, the king of Great Britain is, at this day, king by a fixed rule of succession, according to the laws of his country. . . . His majesty's heirs and successors, each in his time and order, will come to the crown with the same contempt of their choice with which his majesty has succeeded to that he wears.

Whatever may be the success of evasion in explaining away the gross error of *fact*, which supposes that his majesty (though he holds it in concurrence with the wishes) owes his crown to the choice of his people, yet nothing can evade their full explicit declaration, concerning the principle of a right in the people to choose; which right is directly maintained, and tenaciously adhered to. All the oblique insinuations concerning election bottom in this proposition, and are referable to it. Lest the foundation of the king's exclusive legal title should pass for a mere rant of adulatory freedom, the political divine proceeds dogmatically to assert,* that, by the principles of the Revolution, the people of England have acquired three fundamental rights, all of which, with him, compose one system, and lie together in one short sentence; namely, that we have acquired a right,

1. "To choose our own governors."

2. "To cashier them for misconduct."

3. "To frame a government for ourselves."

This new, and hitherto unheard-of, bill of rights,

* P. 34, Discourse on the Love of our Country, by Dr. Price.

though made in the name of the whole people, belongs to those gentlemen and their faction only. The body of the people of England have no share in it. They utterly disclaim it. They will resist the practical assertion of it with their lives and fortunes. They are bound to do so by the laws of their country, made at the time of that very Revolution which is appealed to in favour of the fictitious rights claimed by the Society which abuses its name.

If the *principles* of the Revolution of 1688 are any where to be found, it is in the statute called the *Declaration of Right*. In that most wise, sober, and considerate declaration, drawn up by great lawyers and great statesmen, and not by warm and inexperienced enthusiasts, not one word is said, nor one suggestion made, of a general right "to choose our own *governors*; to cashier them for misconduct; and to *form a government for ourselves*."

This Declaration of Right (the act of the 1st of William and Mary, sess. 2. ch. 2.) is the corner-stone of our constitution, as reinforced, explained, improved, and in its fundamental principles for ever settled. It is called "an Act for declaring the rights and liberties of the subject, and for *settling the succession* of the crown." You will observe, that these rights and this succession are declared in one body, and bound indissolubly together.

A few years after this period, a second opportunity offered for asserting a right of election to the crown. On the prospect of a total failure of issue from King William, and from the Princess, afterwards Queen Anne, the consideration of the settlement of the crown, and of a further security for the liberties of the people, again came before the legislature. Did

they this second time make any provision for legalising the crown on the spurious revolution principles of the Old Jewry? No. They followed the principles which prevailed in the Declaration of Right; indicating with more precision the persons who were to inherit in the protestant line. This act also incorporated, by the same policy, our liberties, and an hereditary succession in the same act. Instead of a right to choose our own governors, they declared that the *succession* in that line (the protestant line drawn from James the First) was absolutely necessary "for the peace, quiet, and security of the realm," and that it was equally urgent on them "to maintain a *certainty in the succession* thereof, to which the subjects may safely have recourse for their protection." Both these acts, in which are heard the unerring, unambiguous oracles of revolution policy, instead of countenancing the delusive, gipsy predictions of a "right to choose our governors," prove to a demonstration how totally adverse the wisdom of the nation was from turning a case of necessity into a rule of law.

Unquestionably there was at the Revolution, in the person of King William, a small and a temporary deviation from the strict order of a regular hereditary succession; but it is against all genuine principles of jurisprudence to draw a principle from a law made in a special case, and regarding an individual person. *Privilegium non transit in exemplum*. If ever there was a time favourable for establishing the principle, that a king of popular choice was the only legal king, without all doubt it was at the Revolution. Its not being done at that time is a proof that the nation was of opinion it ought not to be done at any time.

There is no person so completely ignorant of our history as not to know, that the majority in parliament of both parties were so little disposed to anything resembling that principle, that at first they were determined to place the vacant crown, not on the head of the Prince of Orange, but on that of his wife Mary, daughter of King James, the eldest born of the issue of that king, which they acknowledged as undoubtedly his. It would be to repeat a very trite story, to recal to your memory all those circumstances which demonstrated that their accepting King William was not properly a *choice*; but to all those who did not wish, in effect, to recal King James, or to deluge their country in blood, and again to bring their religion, laws, and liberties, into the peril they had just escaped, it was an act of *necessity*, in the strictest moral sense in which necessity can be taken.

In the very act, in which for a time, and in a single case, parliament departed from the strict order of inheritance, in favour of a prince, who, though not next, was however very near, in the line of succession, it is curious to observe how Lord Somers, who drew the bill called the Declaration of Right, has comported himself on that delicate occasion. It is curious to observe with what address this temporary solution of continuity is kept from the eye; whilst all that could be found in this act of necessity to countenance the idea of an hereditary succession is brought forward, and fostered, and made the most of, by this great man, and by the legislature who followed him. Quitting the dry, imperative style of an act of parliament, he makes the lords and commons fall to a pious, legislative ejaculation, and

declare, that they consider it "as a marvellous providence, and merciful goodness of God to this nation, to preserve their said majesties *royal* persons, most happily to reign over us *on the throne of their ancestors*, for which, from the bottom of their hearts, they return their humblest thanks and praises." — The legislature plainly had in view the act of recognition of the first of Queen Elizabeth, chap. 3d, and of that of James the First, chap. 1st; both acts strongly declaratory of the inheritable nature of the crown: and in many parts they follow, with a nearly literal precision, the words and even the form of thanksgiving which is found in these old declaratory statutes.

The two houses, in the act of King William, did not thank God that they had found a fair opportunity to assert a right to choose their own governors, much less to make an election the *only lawful* title to the crown. Their having been in condition to avoid the very appearance of it, as much as possible, was by them considered as a providential escape. They threw a politic, well-wrought veil over every circumstance tending to weaken the rights which, in the meliorated order of succession, they meant to perpetuate; or which might furnish a precedent for any future departure from what they had then settled for ever. Accordingly, that they might not relax the nerves of their monarchy, and that they might preserve a close conformity to the practice of their ancestors, as it appeared in the declaratory statutes of Queen Mary* and Queen Elizabeth, in the next clause they vest, by recognition, in their majesties, *all* the legal prerogatives of the crown, declaring,

* 1st Mary, sess. 3. ch. 1.

“that in them they are most *fully*, rightfully, and *intirely* invested, incorporated, united, and annexed.” In the clause which follows, for preventing questions, by reason of any pretended titles to the crown, they declare, (observing also in this the traditionary language, along with the traditionary policy, of the nation, and repeating as from a rubric the language of the preceding acts of Elizabeth and James,) that on the preserving “a *certainty* in the succession thereof, the unity, peace, and tranquillity of this nation doth, under God, wholly depend.”

They knew that a doubtful title of succession would but too much resemble an election; and that an election would be utterly destructive of the “unity, peace, and tranquillity of this nation,” which they thought to be considerations of some moment. To provide for these objects, and therefore to exclude for ever the Old Jewry doctrine of “a right to choose our own governors,” they follow with a clause, containing a most solemn pledge, taken from the preceding act of Queen Elizabeth, as solemn a pledge as ever was or can be given in favour of an hereditary succession, and as solemn a renunciation as could be made of the principles by this Society imputed to them. “The lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, do, in the name of all the people aforesaid, most humbly and faithfully submit *themselves, their heirs and posterities for ever*; and do faithfully promise, that they will stand to, maintain, and defend their said majesties, and also the *limitation of the crown*, herein specified and contained, to the utmost of their powers,” &c. &c.

So far is it from being true, that we acquired a right by the Revolution to elect our kings, that if

we had possessed it before, the English nation did at that time most solemnly renounce and abdicate it, for themselves, and for all their posterity for ever. These gentlemen may value themselves as much as they please on their Whig principles; but I never desire to be thought a better Whig than Lord Somers; or to understand the principles of the Revolution better than those by whom it was brought about; or to read in the Declaration of Right any mysteries unknown to those whose penetrating style has engraved in our ordinances, and in our hearts, the words and spirit of that immortal law.

It is true, that, aided with the powers derived from force and opportunity, the nation was at that time, in some sense, free to take what course it pleased for filling the throne; but only free to do so upon the same grounds on which they might have wholly abolished their monarchy, and every other part of their constitution. However, they did not think such bold changes within their commission. It is indeed difficult, perhaps impossible, to give limits to the mere *abstract* competence of the supreme power, such as was exercised by parliament at that time; but the limits of a *moral* competence, subjecting, even in powers more indisputably sovereign, occasional will to permanent reason, and to the steady maxims of faith, justice, and fixed fundamental policy, are perfectly intelligible, and perfectly binding upon those who exercise any authority, under any name, or under any title, in the state. The house of lords, for instance, is not morally competent to dissolve the house of commons; no, nor even to dissolve itself, nor to abdicate, if it would, its portion in the legislature of the kingdom. Though a king may

abdicate for his own person, he cannot abdicate for the monarchy. By as strong, or by a stronger reason, the house of commons cannot renounce its share of authority. The engagement and pact of society, which generally goes by the name of the constitution, forbids such invasion and such surrender. The constituent parts of a state are obliged to hold their public faith with each other, and with all those who derive any serious interest under their engagements, as much as the whole state is bound to keep its faith with separate communities. Otherwise competence and power would soon be confounded, and no law be left but the will of a prevailing force. On this principle the succession of the crown has always been what it now is, an hereditary succession by law: in the old line it was a succession by the common law; in the new by the statute law, operating on the principles of the common law, not changing the substance, but regulating the mode, and describing the persons. Both these descriptions of law are of the same force, and are derived from an equal authority, emanating from the common agreement and original compact of the state, *communi sponsione reipublicæ*; and as such are equally binding on king and people too, as long as the terms are observed, and they continue the same body politic.

It is far from impossible to reconcile, if we do not suffer ourselves to be entangled in the mazes of metaphysic sophistry, the use both of a fixed rule and an occasional deviation; the sacredness of an hereditary principle of succession in our government, with a power of change in its application in cases of extreme emergency. Even in that extremity, (if we take the measure of our rights by our exercise of

them at the Revolution,) the change is to the peccant part only; to the part which effected the necessary deviation; and even then effected without a decomposition of the ancient and political mass, for the purpose of originating a new civil order out of the first elements of the old.

A state without the means of some change is without the means of its conservation. Without such means it might even risk the loss of that part of the constitution which it wished the most religiously to preserve. The two principles of conservation and correction operated strongly at the two critical periods of the Restoration and Revolution, when England found itself without a king. At both those periods the nation had lost the bond of union in their ancient edifice; they did not, however, dissolve the whole fabric. On the contrary, in both cases they regenerated the deficient part of the old constitution through the parts which were not impaired. They kept these old parts exactly as they were, that the part recovered might be suited to them. They acted by the ancient organised states in the shape of their old organisation, and not by the organic *molecules* of a disbanded people. At no time, perhaps, did the sovereign legislature manifest a more tender regard to that fundamental principle of British constitutional policy, than at the time of the Revolution, when it deviated from the direct line of hereditary succession. The crown was carried somewhat out of the line in which it had before moved; but the new line was derived from the same stock. It was still a line of hereditary descent; still an hereditary descent in the same blood, though an hereditary descent qualified with protestantism. When the legislature

entered the direction, but kept the principle, they showed that they held it inviolable.

On this principle, the law of inheritance had admitted some amendment in the old time, and long before the æra of the Revolution. Some time after the Conquest, great questions arose upon the legal principles of hereditary descent. It became a matter of doubt, whether the heir *per capita* or the heir *per stirpes* was to succeed; but whether the heir *per capita* gave way when the heirdom *per stirpes* took place, or the catholic heir when the protestant was preferred, the inheritable principle survived with a sort of immortality through all transmigrations—*multosque per annos stat fortuna domus et avi numerantur avorum*. This is the spirit of our constitution, not only in its settled course, but in all its revolutions. Whoever came in, or however he came in, whether he obtained the crown by law, or by force, the hereditary succession was either continued or adopted.

The gentlemen of the Society for Revolutions see nothing in that of 1688, but the deviation from the constitution; and they take the deviation from the principle for the principle. They have little regard to the obvious consequences of their doctrine, though they may see, that it leaves positive authority in very few of the positive institutions of this country. When such an unwarrantable maxim is once established, that no throne is lawful but the elective, no one act of the princes who preceded this æra of fictitious election can be valid. Do these theorists mean to imitate some of their predecessors, who dragged the bodies of our ancient sovereigns out of the quiet of their tombs? Do they mean to attain

and disable backwards all the kings that have reigned before the Revolution, and consequently to stain the throne of England with the blot of a continual usurpation? Do they mean to invalidate, annul, or to call into question, together with the titles of the whole line of our kings, that great body of our statute law which passed under those whom they treat as usurpers? to annul laws of inestimable value to our liberties—of as great value at least as any which have passed at or since the period of the Revolution? If kings, who did not owe their crown to the choice of their people, had no title to make laws, what will become of the statute *De tallagio non concedendo*? of the *Petition of Right*? of the act of *Habeas corpus*? Do these new doctors of the rights of men presume to assert, that King James the Second, who came to the crown as next of blood, according to the rules of a then unqualified succession, was not to all intents and purposes a lawful king of England, before he had done any of those acts which were justly construed into an abdication of his crown? If he was not, much trouble in parliament might have been saved at the period these gentlemen commemorate. But King James was a bad king with a good title, and not an usurper. The princes who succeeded according to the act of parliament which settled the crown on the Electress Sophia and on her descendants, being protestants, came in as much by a title of inheritance as King James did. He came in according to the law, as it stood at his accession to the crown; and the princes of the house of Brunswick came to the inheritance of the crown, not by election, but by the law, as it stood at their several

accessions of protestant descent and inheritance : as I hope I have shown sufficiently.

The law, by which this royal family is specifically destined to the succession, is the act of the 12th and 13th of King William. The terms of this act bind "us and our *heirs*, and our *posterity*, to them, their *heirs*, and their *posterity*," being protestants, to the end of time, in the same words as the Declaration of Right had bound us to the heirs of King William and Queen Mary. It therefore secures both an hereditary crown, and an hereditary allegiance. On what ground, except the constitutional policy of forming an establishment to secure that kind of succession which is to preclude a choice of the people for ever, could the legislature have fastidiously rejected the fair and abundant choice which our own country presented to them, and searched in strange lands for a foreign princess, from whose womb the line of our future rulers were to derive their title to govern millions of men through a series of ages ?

The Princess Sophia was named in the act of settlement of the 12th and 13th of King William, for a *stock* and root of *inheritance* to our kings, and not for her merits as a temporary administratrix of a power, which she might not, and in fact did not herself ever exercise. She was adopted for one reason, and for one only ; because, says the act, "the most excellent Princess Sophia, Electress and Duchess Dowager of Hanover, is *daughter* of the most excellent Princess Elizabeth, late Queen of Bohemia, *daughter* of our late *sovereign lord* King James the First, of happy memory, and is hereby declared to be the next in *succession* in the pro-

testant line," &c. &c. ; "and the crown shall continue to the *heirs* of her body, being Protestants." This limitation was made by parliament, that through the Princess Sophia an inheritable line not only was to be continued in future, but (what they thought very material) that through her it was to be connected with the old stock of inheritance in King James the First; in order that the monarchy might preserve an unbroken unity through all ages, and might be preserved (with safety to our religion) in the old approved mode by descent, in which, if our liberties had been once endangered, they had often, through all storms and struggles of prerogative and privilege, been preserved. They did well. No experience has taught us, that in any other course or method than that of an *hereditary crown* our liberties can be regularly perpetuated and preserved sacred as our *hereditary right*. An irregular, convulsive movement may be necessary to throw off an irregular, convulsive disease. But the course of succession is the healthy habit of the British constitution. Was it that the legislature wanted, at the act for the limitation of the crown in the Hanoverian line, drawn through the female descendants of James the First, a due sense of the inconveniences of having two or three, or possibly more, foreigners in succession to the British throne? No!—they had a due sense of the evils which might happen from such foreign rule, and more than a due sense of them. But a more decisive proof cannot be given of the full conviction of the British nation, that the principles of the Revolution did not authorise them to elect kings at their pleasure, and without any attention to the ancient fundamental principles of our government,

than their continuing to adopt a plan of hereditary protestant succession in the old line, with all the dangers and all the inconveniences of its being a foreign line full before their eyes, and operating with the utmost force upon their minds.

The people of England will not ape the fashions they have never tried, nor go back to those which they have found mischievous on trial. They look upon the legal hereditary succession of their crown as among their rights, not as among their wrongs ; as a benefit, not as a grievance ; as a security for their liberty, not as a badge of servitude. They look on the frame of their commonwealth, *such as it stands*, to be of inestimable value ; and they conceive the undisturbed succession of the crown to be a pledge of the stability and perpetuity of all the other members of our constitution.

I shall beg leave, before I go any further, to take notice of some paltry artifices, which the abettors of election, as the only lawful title to the crown, are ready to employ, in order to render the support of the just principles of our constitution a task somewhat invidious. These sophisters substitute a fictitious cause, and feigned personages, in whose favour they suppose you engaged, whenever you defend the inheritable nature of the crown. It is common with them to dispute as if they were in a conflict with some of those exploded fanatics of slavery, who formerly maintained, what I believe no creature now maintains, "that the crown is held by divine, hereditary, and indefeasible right." These old fanatics of single arbitrary power, dogmatised as if hereditary royalty was the only lawful government in the world, just as our new fanatics of popular arbitrary power

maintain that a popular election is the sole lawful source of authority. The old prerogative enthusiasts, it is true, did speculate foolishly, and perhaps impiously too, as if monarchy had more of a divine sanction than any other mode of government; and as if a right to govern by inheritance were in strictness *indefeasible*, in every person who should be found in the succession to a throne, and under every circumstance: which no civil or political right can be. But an absurd opinion concerning the king's hereditary right to the crown, does not prejudice one that is rational, and bottomed upon solid principles of law and policy. If all the absurd theories of lawyers and divines were to vitiate the objects in which they are conversant, we should have no law, and no religion left in the world. But an absurd theory on one side of a question, forms no justification for alleging a false fact, or promulgating mischievous maxims, on the other.

The second claim of the Revolution Society, is "a right of cashiering their governors for *misconduct*." Perhaps the apprehensions our ancestors entertained of forming such a precedent as that "of cashiering for misconduct," was the cause that the declaration of the act, which implied the abdication of King James, was, if it had any fault, rather too guarded, and too circumstantial.* But all this guard, and all this accumulation of circumstances, serve to show the

* "That King James the Second, having endeavoured to *subvert the constitution* of the kingdom by breaking the *original contract* between king and people, and, by the advice of jesuits and other wicked persons, having violated the *fundamental laws*, and *having withdrawn himself out of the kingdom*, hath *abdicated* the government, and the throne is thereby *vacant*."

spirit of caution which predominated in the national councils, in a situation in which men, irritated by oppression, and elevated by a triumph over it, are apt to abandon themselves to violent and extreme courses: it shows the anxiety of the great men who influenced the conduct of affairs at that great event, to make the Revolution a parent of settlement, and not a nursery of future revolutions.

No government could stand a moment, if it could be blown down with any thing so loose and indefinite as an opinion of "*misconduct.*" They who led at the Revolution, grounded their virtual abdication of King James upon no such light and uncertain principle. They charged him with nothing less than a design, confirmed by a multitude of illegal overt acts, to *subvert the Protestant church and state*, and their *fundamental*, unquestionable laws and liberties: they charged him with having broken the *original contract* between king and people. This was more than *misconduct*. A grave and overruling necessity obliged them to take the step they took, and took with infinite reluctance, as under that most rigorous of all laws. Their trust for the future preservation of the constitution was not in future revolutions. The grand policy of all their regulations was to render it almost impracticable for any future sovereign to compel the states of the kingdom to have again recourse to those violent remedies. They left the crown what, in the eye and estimation of law, it had ever been, perfectly irresponsible. In order to lighten the crown still further, they aggravated responsibility on ministers of state. By the statute of the first of King William, sess. 2nd, called "*the act for declaring the rights and liberties of the subject, and for settling the succession*

of the crown," they enacted, that the ministers should serve the crown on the terms of that declaration. They secured soon after the *frequent meetings of parliament*, by which the whole government would be under the constant inspection and active control of the popular representative and of the magnates of the kingdom. In the next great constitutional act, that of the 12th and 13th of King William, for the further limitation of the crown, and *better securing* the rights and liberties of the subject, they provided, "that no pardon under the great seal of England should be pleadable to an impeachment by the commons in parliament." The rule laid down for government in the Declaration of Right, the constant inspection of parliament, the practical claim of impeachment, they thought infinitely a better security, not only for their constitutional liberty, but against the vices of administration, than the reservation of a right so difficult in the practice, so uncertain in the issue, and often so mischievous in the consequences, as that of "cashiering their governors."

Dr. Price, in this sermon, condemns very properly the practice of gross, adulatory addresses to kings. Instead of this fulsome style, he proposes that his majesty should be told, on occasions of congratulation, that "he is to consider himself as more properly the servant than the sovereign of his people." For a compliment, this new form of address does not seem to be very soothing. Those who are servants in name, as well as in effect, do not like to be told of their situation, their duty, and their obligations. The slave, in the old play, tells his master, "*Hæc commemoratio est quasi exprobatio.*" It is not pleasant as compliment; it is not wholesome as instruc-

tion. After all, if the king were to bring himself to echo this new kind of address, to adopt it in terms, and even to take the appellation of Servant of the People, as his royal style, how either he or we should be much mended by it, I cannot imagine. I have seen very assuming letters, signed, "Your most obedient, humble servant."

I should have considered all this as no more than a sort of flippant, vain discourse, in which, as in an un-savoury fume, several persons suffer the spirit of liberty to evaporate, if it were not plainly in support of the idea, and a part of the scheme, of "cashiering kings for misconduct." In that light it is worth some observation.

Kings, in one sense, are undoubtedly the servants of the people, because their power has no other rational end than that of the general advantage; but it is not true that they are, in the ordinary sense (by our constitution at least), anything like servants; the essence of whose situation is to obey the commands of some other, and to be removable at pleasure. But the king of Great Britain obeys no other person; all other persons are individually, and collectively too, under him, and owe to him a legal obedience. The law, which knows neither to flatter nor to insult, calls this high magistrate, not our servant, as this humble divine calls him, but "*our sovereign lord the King;*" and we, on our parts, have learned to speak only the primitive language of the law, and not the confused jargon of their Babylonian pulpits.

As he is not to obey us, but we are to obey the law in him, our constitution has made no sort of provision towards rendering him, as a servant, in any degree responsible. Our constitution knows nothing of a magistrate like the *Justicia* of Arragon; nor of

any court legally appointed, nor of any process legally settled, for submitting the king to the responsibility belonging to all servants. In this he is not distinguished from the commons and the lords; who, in their several public capacities, can never be called to an account for their conduct; although the Revolution Society chooses to assert, in direct opposition to one of the wisest and most beautiful parts of our constitution, that "a king is no more than the first servant of the public, created by it, *and responsible to it.*"

Ill would our ancestors at the Revolution have deserved their fame for wisdom, if they had found no security for their freedom, but in rendering their government feeble in its operations and precarious in its tenure; if they had been able to contrive no better remedy against arbitrary power than civil confusion. Let these gentlemen state who that *representative* public is to whom they will affirm the king, as a servant, to be responsible. It will be then time enough for me to produce to them the positive statute law which affirms that he is not.

The ceremony of cashiering kings, of which these gentlemen talk so much at their ease, can rarely, if ever, be performed without force. It then becomes a case of war, and not of constitution. Laws are commanded to hold their tongues amongst arms; and tribunals fall to the ground with the peace they are no longer able to uphold. The Revolution of 1688 was obtained by a just war, in the only case in which any war, and much more a civil war, can be just. "*Justa bella quibus necessaria.*" The question of dethroning, or if these gentlemen like the phrase better, "cashiering kings," will always be, as it has always been, an extraordinary question of state, and

wholly out of the law ; a question (like all other questions of state) of dispositions, and of means, and of probable consequences, rather than of positive rights. As it was not made for common abuses, so it is not to be agitated by common minds. The speculative line of demarcation, where obedience ought to end, and resistance must begin, is faint, obscure, and not easily definable. It is not a single act, or a single event, which determines it. Governments must be abused and deranged indeed, before it can be thought of ; and the prospect of the future must be as bad as the experience of the past. When things are in that lamentable condition, the nature of the disease is to indicate the remedy to those whom nature has qualified to administer in extremities this critical, ambiguous, bitter potion to a distempered state. Times, and occasions, and provocations, will teach their own lessons. The wise will determine from the gravity of the case ; the irritable from sensibility to oppression ; the high-minded from disdain and indignation at abusive power in unworthy hands ; the brave and bold from the love of honourable danger in a generous cause : but, with or without right, a revolution will be the very last resource of the thinking and the good.

The third head of right, asserted by the pulpit of the Old Jewry, namely, the "right to form a government for ourselves," has, at least, as little countenance from anything done at the Revolution, either in precedent or principle, as the two first of their claims. The Revolution was made to preserve our *ancient*, indisputable laws and liberties, and that *ancient* constitution of government which is our only security for law and liberty. If you are desirous of knowing

the spirit of our constitution, and the policy which predominated in that great period which has secured it to this hour, pray look for both in our histories, in our records, in our acts of parliament, and journals of parliament, and not in the sermons of the Old Jewry, and the after-dinner toasts of the Revolution Society. In the former you will find other ideas and another language. Such a claim is as ill-suited to our temper and wishes as it is unsupported by any appearance of authority. The very idea of the fabrication of a new government is enough to fill us with disgust and horror. We wished at the period of the Revolution, and do now wish, to derive all we possess as *an inheritance from our forefathers*. Upon that body and stock of inheritance we have taken care not to inoculate any scion alien to the nature of the original plant. All the reformations we have hitherto made have proceeded upon the principle of reverence to antiquity; and I hope, nay I am persuaded, that all those which possibly may be made hereafter, will be carefully formed upon analogical precedent, authority, and example.

Our oldest reformation is that of Magna Charta. You will see that Sir Edward Coke, that great oracle of our law, and indeed all the great men who follow him, to Blackstone,* are industrious to prove the pedigree of our liberties. They endeavour to prove, that the ancient charter, the Magna Charta of King John, was connected with another positive charter from Henry I., and that both the one and the other were nothing more than a re-affirmance of the still more ancient standing law of the kingdom. In the matter of fact, for the greater part, these authors

* See Blackstone's Magna Charta, printed at Oxford, 1759.

appear to be in the right ; perhaps not always ; but if the lawyers mistake in some particulars, it proves my position still the more strongly ; because it demonstrates the powerful prepossession towards antiquity, with which the minds of all our lawyers and legislators, and of all the people whom they wish to influence, have been always filled ; and the stationary policy of this kingdom in considering their most sacred rights and franchises as an *inheritance*.

In the famous law of the 3rd of Charles I., called the *Petition of Right*, the parliament says to the king, "Your subjects have *inherited* this freedom," claiming their franchises not on abstract principles "as the rights of men," but as the rights of Englishmen, and as a patrimony derived from their forefathers. Selden, and the other profoundly learned men, who drew this petition of right, were as well acquainted, at least, with all the general theories concerning the "rights of men," as any of the discoursers in our pulpits, or on your tribune ; full as well as Dr. Price, or as the Abbé Siéyès. But, for reasons worthy of that practical wisdom which superseded their theoretic science, they preferred this positive, recorded, *hereditary* title to all which can be dear to the man and the citizen, to that vague speculative right, which exposed their sure inheritance to be scrambled for and torn to pieces by every wild, litigious spirit.

The same policy pervades all the laws which have since been made for the preservation of our liberties. In the 1st of William and Mary, in the famous statute, called the Declaration of Right, the two houses utter not a syllable of "a right to frame a government for themselves." You will see, that their whole care was to secure the religion, laws, and

liberties, that had been long possessed, and had been lately endangered. "Taking* into their most serious consideration the *best* means for making such an establishment, that their religion, laws, and liberties might not be in danger of being again subverted," they auspicate all their proceedings, by stating as some of those *best* means, "in the *first place*" to do "as their *ancestors in like cases have usually done* for vindicating their *ancient* rights and liberties, to *declare*;"—and then they pray the king and queen, "that it may be *declared* and enacted, that *all and singular* the rights and liberties *asserted and declared*, are the true *ancient* and indubitable rights and liberties of the people of this kingdom."

You will observe, that from Magna Charta to the Declaration of Right, it has been the uniform policy of our constitution to claim and assert our liberties, as an *entailed inheritance* derived to us from our forefathers, and to be transmitted to our posterity; as an estate specially belonging to the people of this kingdom, without any reference whatever to any other more general or prior right. By this means our constitution preserves an unity in so great a diversity of its parts. We have an inheritable crown; an inheritable peerage; and a house of commons and a people inheriting privileges, franchises, and liberties, from a long line of ancestors.

The policy appears to me to be the result of profound reflection; or rather the happy effect of following nature, which is wisdom without reflection, and above it. A spirit of innovation is generally the result of a selfish temper, and confined views. People will not look forward to posterity, who never look

backward to their ancestors. Besides, the people of England well know, that the idea of inheritance furnishes a sure principle of conservation, and a sure principle of transmission ; without at all excluding a principle of improvement. It leaves acquisition free; but it secures what it acquires. Whatever advantages are obtained by a state proceeding on these maxims, are locked fast as in a sort of family settlement; grasped as in a kind of mortmain for ever. By a constitutional policy working after the pattern of nature, we receive, we hold, we transmit our government and our privileges, in the same manner in which we enjoy and transmit our property and our lives. The institutions of policy, the goods of fortune, the gifts of Providence, are handed down to us, and from us, in the same course and order. Our political system is placed in a just correspondence and symmetry with the order of the world, and with the mode of existence decreed to a permanent body composed of transitory parts; wherein, by the disposition of a stupendous wisdom, moulding together the great mysterious incorporation of the human race, the whole, at one time, is never old, or middle-aged, or young, but, in a condition of unchangeable constancy, moves on through the varied tenour of perpetual decay, fall, renovation, and progression. Thus, by preserving the method of nature in the conduct of the state, in what we improve, we are never wholly new; in what we retain, we are never wholly obsolete. By adhering in this manner and on those principles to our forefathers, we are guided not by the superstition of antiquarians, but by the spirit of philosophic analogy. In this choice of inheritance we have given to our frame of polity the image of a

relation in blood ; binding up the constitution of our country with our dearest domestic ties ; adopting our fundamental laws into the bosom of our family affections ; keeping inseparable, and cherishing with the warmth of all their combined and mutually reflected charities, our state, our hearths, our sepulchres, and our altars.

Through the same plan of a conformity to nature in our artificial institutions, and by calling in the aid of her unerring and powerful instincts, to fortify the fallible and feeble contrivances of our reason, we have derived several other, and those no small benefits, from considering our liberties in the light of an inheritance. Always acting as if in the presence of canonised forefathers, the spirit of freedom, leading in itself to misrule and excess, is tempered with an awful gravity. This idea of a liberal descent inspires us with a sense of habitual native dignity, which prevents that upstart insolence, almost inevitably adhering to and disgracing those who are the first acquirers of any distinction. By this means our liberty becomes a noble freedom. It carries an imposing and majestic aspect. It has a pedigree and illustrating ancestors. It has its bearings and its ensigns armorial. It has its gallery of portraits ; its monumental inscriptions ; its records, evidences, and titles. We procure reverence to our civil institutions on the principle upon which nature teaches us to revere individual men ; on account of their age, and on account of those from whom they are descended. All your sophisters cannot produce anything better adapted to preserve a rational and manly freedom than the course that we have pursued, who have chosen our nature rather than our speculations, our breasts rather than our

inventions, for the great conservatories and magazines of our rights and privileges.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France*, 1790.

THE SOVEREIGN'S CHOICE OF MINISTERS.—A plan of favouritism for our executory government is essentially at variance with the plan of our legislature. One great end undoubtedly of a mixed government like ours, composed of monarchy, and of controls, on the part of the higher people and the lower, is that the prince shall not be able to violate the laws. This is useful indeed and fundamental. But this, even at first view, is no more than a negative advantage; an armour merely defensive. It is therefore next in order, and equal in importance, *that the discretionary powers which are necessarily vested in the monarch, whether for the execution of the laws, or for the nomination to magistracy and office, or for conducting the affairs of peace and war, or for ordering the revenue, should all be exercised upon public principles and national grounds, and not on the likings or prejudices, the intrigues or policies, of a court.* This, I said, is equal in importance to the securing a government according to law. The laws reach but a very little way. Constitute government how you please, infinitely the greater part of it must depend upon the exercise of the powers which are left at large to the prudence and uprightness of ministers of state. Even all the use and potency of the laws depends upon them. Without them your commonwealth is no better than a scheme upon paper; and not a living, active, effective constitution. It is possible that through negligence, or ignorance, or design artfully conducted, ministers may suffer one part of government to languish, another to be perverted

from its purposes, and every valuable interest of the country to fall into ruin and decay, without possibility of fixing any single act on which a criminal prosecution can be justly grounded. The due arrangement of men in the active part of the state, far from being foreign to the purposes of a wise government, ought to be among its very first and dearest objects. When, therefore, the abettors of the new system tell us that between them and their opposers there is nothing but a struggle for power, and that therefore we are no ways concerned in it; we must tell those who have the impudence to insult us in this manner, that of all things, we ought to be the most concerned who and what sort of men they are that hold the trust of everything that is dear to us. Nothing can render this a point of indifference to the nation, but what must either render us totally desperate, or soothe us into the security of idiots. We must soften into a credulity below the milkiness of infancy, to think all men virtuous. We must be tainted with a malignity truly diabolical, to believe all the world to be equally wicked and corrupt. Men are in public life as in private, some good, some evil. The elevation of the one, and the depression of the other, are the first objects of all true policy. But that form of government, which, neither in its direct institutions, nor in their immediate tendency, has contrived to throw its affairs into the most trustworthy hands, but has left its whole executory system to be disposed of agreeably to the uncontrolled pleasures of any one man, however excellent or virtuous, is a plan of polity defective not only in that member, but consequentially erroneous in every part of it.

In arbitrary governments, the constitution of the ministry follows the constitution of the legislature. Both the law and the magistrate are the creatures of will. It must be so. Nothing, indeed, will appear more certain, on any tolerable consideration of this matter, than that *every sort of government ought to have its administration correspondent to its legislature*. If it should be otherwise, things must fall into an hideous disorder. The people of a free commonwealth, who have taken such care that their laws should be the result of general consent, cannot be so senseless as to suffer their executory system to be composed of persons on whom they have no dependence, and whom no proofs of the public love and confidence have recommended to those powers, upon the use of which the very being of the state depends.

The popular election of magistrates, and popular disposition of rewards and honours, is one of the first advantages of a free state. Without it, or something equivalent to it, perhaps the people cannot long enjoy the substance of freedom; certainly none of the vivifying energy of good government. The frame of our commonwealth did not admit of such an actual election: but it provided as well, and (while the spirit of the constitution is preserved) better, for all the effects of it, than by the method of suffrage in any democratic state whatsoever. It had always, until of late, been held the first duty of Parliament *to refuse to support Government until power was in the hands of persons who were acceptable to the people, or while factions predominated in the Court of which the nation had no confidence*. Thus all the good effects of popular election were supposed to be secured to us, without the mischiefs attending on

perpetual intrigue, and a distinct canvas for every particular office throughout the body of the people. This was the most noble and refined part of our constitution. The people, by their representatives and grandees, were intrusted with a deliberative power in making laws; the king with the control of his negative. The king was intrusted with the deliberative choice and the election to office: the people had the negative in a parliamentary refusal to support. Formerly this power of control was what kept ministers in awe of parliaments, and parliaments in reverence with the people. If the use of this power of control on the system and persons of administration is gone, everything is lost, parliament and all. We may assure ourselves, that if parliament will tamely see evil men take possession of all the strongholds of their country, and allow them times and means to fortify themselves, under a pretence of giving them a fair trial, and upon a hope of discovering, whether they will not be reformed by power, and whether their measures will not be better than their morals; such a parliament will give countenance to their measures also, whatever that parliament may pretend, and whatever those measures may be.

Every good political institution must have a preventive operation as well as a remedial. It ought to have a natural tendency to exclude bad men from government, and not to trust for the safety of the state to subsequent punishment alone: punishment, which has ever been tardy and uncertain; and which, when power is suffered in bad hands, may chance to fall rather on the injured than the criminal.

Before men are put forward into the great trusts of the state, *they ought* by their conduct to have

obtained such a degree of estimation in their country, as may be some sort of pledge and security to the public, that they will not abuse those trusts. It is no mean security for a proper use of power, that a man has shown by the general tenor of his actions, that the affection, the good opinion, the confidence of his fellow-citizens have been among the principal objects of his life ; and that he has owed none of the degradations of his power or fortune to a settled contempt, or occasional forfeiture, of their esteem.

That man who before he comes into power has no friends, or who coming into power is obliged to desert his friends, or who losing it has no friends to sympathise with him ; he who has no sway among any part of the landed or commercial interest, but whose whole importance has begun with his office, and is sure to end with it : is a person who ought never to be suffered by a controlling parliament to continue in any of those situations which confer the lead and direction of all our public affairs ; because such a man *has no connexion with the interest of the people.*

Those knots or cabals of men who have got together avowedly without any public principle, in order to sell their conjunct iniquity at the higher rate, and are therefore universally odious, ought never to be suffered to domineer in the state ; because they have *no connexion with the sentiments and opinions of the people.*

These are considerations which in my opinion enforce the necessity of having some better reason, in a free country, and a free parliament, for supporting the ministers of the crown, than that short one, *That the king has thought proper to appoint them.* There is something very courtly in this. But it is a *principle* pregnant with all sorts of mischief, in a

constitution like ours, to turn the views of active men from the country to the court. Whatever be the road to power, that is the road which will be trod. If the opinion of the country be of no use as a means of power or consideration, the qualities which usually procure that opinion will be no longer cultivated. And whether it will be right in a state so popular in its constitution as ours, to leave ambition without popular motives, and to trust all to the operation of pure virtue in the minds of kings and ministers and public men, must be submitted to the judgment and good sense of the people of England.

Cunning men are here apt to break in, and without directly controverting the principle, to raise objections from the difficulty under which the sovereign labours to distinguish the genuine voice and sentiments of his people, from the clamour of a faction, by which it is so easily counterfeited. The nation, they say, is generally divided into parties, with views and passions utterly irreconcilable. If the king should put his affairs into the hands of any one of them, he is sure to disgust the rest; if he select particular men from among the rest, it is a hazard that he disgusts them all. Those who are left out, however divided before, will soon run into a body of opposition; which, being a collection of many discontents into one focus, will without doubt be hot and violent enough. Faction will make its cries resound through the nation, as if the whole were in an uproar, when by far the majority, and much the better part, will seem for awhile as it were annihilated by the quiet in which their virtue and moderation incline them to enjoy the blessings of government. Besides that the opinion of the mere

vulgar is a miserable rule even with regard to themselves, on account of their violence and instability. So that if you were to gratify them in their humour to-day, that very gratification would be a ground of their dissatisfaction on the next. Now as all these rules of public opinion are to be collected with great difficulty, and to be applied with equal uncertainty as to the effect, what better can a king of England do, than to employ such men as he finds to have views and inclinations most conformable to his own ; who are least infected with pride and self-will ; and who are least moved by such popular humours as are perpetually traversing his designs, and disturbing his service ; trusting that when he means no ill to his people, he will be supported in his appointments, whether he chooses to keep or to change, as his private judgement or his pleasure leads him. He will find a sure resource in the real weight and influence of the crown, when it is not suffered to become an instrument in the hands of a faction.

I will not pretend to say that there is nothing at all in this mode of reasoning ; because I will not assert that there is no difficulty in the art of government. Undoubtedly the very best administration must encounter a great deal of opposition ; and the very worst will find more support than it deserves. Sufficient appearances will never be wanting to those who have a mind to deceive themselves. It is a fallacy in constant use with those who would level all things, and confound right with wrong, to insist upon the inconveniences which are attached to every choice, without taking into consideration the different weight and consequence of those inconveniences. The question is not concerning *absolute*

discontent or *perfect* satisfaction in government; neither of which can be pure and unmixed at any time, or upon any system. The controversy is about that degree of good-humour in the people, which may possibly be attained, and ought certainly to be looked for. While some politicians may be waiting to know whether the sense of every individual be against them, accurately distinguishing the vulgar from the better sort, drawing lines between the enterprises of a faction and the efforts of a people, they may chance to see the government, which they are so nicely weighing, and dividing, and distinguishing, tumble to the ground in the midst of their wise deliberation. Prudent men, when so great an object as the security of government, or even its peace, is at stake, will not run the risk of a decision which may be fatal to it. They who can read the political sky will see a hurricane in a cloud no bigger than a hand at the very edge of the horizon, and will run into the first harbour. No lines can be laid down for civil or political wisdom. They are a matter incapable of exact definition. But, though no man can draw a stroke between the confines of day and night, yet light and darkness are upon the whole tolerably distinguishable. Nor will it be impossible for a prince to find out such a mode of government, and such persons to administer it, as will give a great degree of content to his people; without any curious and anxious research for that abstract, universal, perfect harmony, which while he is seeking, he abandons those means of ordinary tranquillity which are in his power without any research at all.—*Thoughts on the Cause of the present Discontents.* 1770.

THE PARLIAMENT.

THE HOUSE OF LORDS.—Our house of lords, the chief virtual representatives of our aristocracy, the great ground and pillar of security to the landed interest, and that main link by which it is connected with the law and the Crown.—*Thoughts on the Cause of the present Discontents.*

THE HOUSES OF LORDS AND COMMONS.—In legal construction, the sense of the people of England is to be collected from the house of commons; and, though I do not deny the possibility of an abuse of this trust as well as any other, yet I think, that without the most weighty reasons, and in the most urgent exigencies, it is highly dangerous to suppose that the house speaks anything contrary to the sense of the people, or that the representative is silent when the sense of the constituent, strongly, decidedly, and upon long deliberation, speaks audibly upon any topic of moment. If there is a doubt, whether the house of commons represents perfectly the whole commons of Great Britain (I think there is none), there can be no question but that the lords and the commons together represent the sense of the whole people to the crown, and to the world. Thus it is, when we speak legally and constitutionally. In a great measure, it is equally true, when we speak prudentially; but I do not pretend to assert, that there are no other principles to guide discretion than those which are or can be fixed by some law, or some constitution; yet before the legally presumed sense of the people should be superseded by a supposition of one more real (as in all cases where a legal pre-

sumption is to be ascertained), some strong proofs ought to exist of a contrary disposition in the people at large, and some decisive indications of their desire upon this subject.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace*. 1796.

CHARACTER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.—The house of commons was supposed originally to be *no part of the standing government of this country*. It was considered as a *control*, issuing *immediately* from the people, and speedily to be resolved into the mass from whence it arose. In this respect it was in the higher part of government what juries are in the lower. The capacity of a magistrate being transitory, and that of a citizen, permanent, the latter capacity it was hoped would of course preponderate in all discussions, not only between the people and the standing authority of the crown, but between the people and the fleeting authority of the house of commons itself. It was hoped that, being of a middle nature between subject and government, they would feel with a more tender and a nearer interest everything that concerned the people, than the other remoter and more permanent parts of legislature.

Whatever alterations time and the necessary accommodation of business may have introduced, this character can never be sustained, unless the house of commons shall be made to bear some stamp of the actual disposition of the people at large. It would (among public misfortunes) be an evil more natural and tolerable, that the house of commons should be infected with every epidemical frenzy of the people, as this would indicate some consanguinity, some sympathy of nature with their constituents, than that they should in all cases be wholly untouched by the opinions and feelings of the

people out of doors. By this want of sympathy they would cease to be a house of commons. For it is not the derivation of the power of that house from the people, which makes it in a distinct sense their representative. The king is the representative of the people; so are the lords; so are the judges. They all are trustees for the people, as well as the commons; because no power is given for the sole sake of the holder; and although government is certainly an institution of divine authority, yet its forms and the persons who administer it, all originate from the people.

A popular origin cannot, therefore, be the characteristic distinction of a popular representative. The virtue, spirit, and essence of a house of commons consists in its being the express image of the feelings of the nation. It was not instituted to be a control *upon* the people, as of late it has been taught, by a doctrine of the most pernicious tendency. It was designed as a control *for* the people. Other institutions have been formed for the purpose of checking popular excesses; and they are, I apprehend, fully adequate to their object. If not, they ought to be made so. The house of commons, as it was never intended for the support of peace and subordination, is miserably appointed for that service; having no stronger weapon than its mace, and no better officer than its serjeant-at-arms, which it can command of its own proper authority. A vigilant and jealous eye over executory and judicial magistracy; an anxious care of public money, an openness, approaching towards facility, to public complaint: these seem to be the true characteristics of a house of commons. But an addressing house of commons, and a petitioning nation; a house of commons full of confidence,

when the nation is plunged in despair; in the utmost harmony with ministers, whom the people regard with the utmost abhorrence; who vote thanks, when the public opinion calls upon them for impeachments; who are eager to grant, when the general voice demands account; who, in all disputes between the people and administration, presume against the people: who punish their disorders, but refuse even to inquire into the provocations to them: this is an unnatural, a monstrous state of things in this constitution. Such an assembly may be a great, wise, awful senate: but it is not, to any popular purpose, a house of commons.—*Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents.*

CONNECTION OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS WITH THE PEOPLE.—They who call upon you (the house of commons) to belong *wholly* to the people, are those who wish you to return to your *proper* home; to the sphere of your duty, to the post of your honour, to the mansion-house of all genuine, serene, and solid satisfaction. We (the house of commons) have furnished to the people of England (indeed we have) some real cause of jealousy. Let us leave that sort of company which, if it does not destroy our innocence, pollutes our honour; let us free ourselves at once from everything that can increase their suspicions, and inflame their just resentment; let us cast away from us, with a generous scorn, all the love-tokens and symbols that we have been vain and light enough to accept;—all the bracelets, and snuff-boxes, and miniature pictures, and hair devices, and all the other adulterous trinkets that are the pledges of our alienation, and the monuments of our shame. Let us return to our legitimate home, and all jars

and all quarrels will be lost in embraces. Let the commons in parliament assembled be one and the same thing with the commons at large. The distinctions that are made to separate us are unnatural and wicked contrivances. Let us identify, let us incorporate, ourselves with the people. Let us cut all the cables and snap the chains which tie us to an unfaithful shore, and enter the friendly harbour, that shoots far out into the main its moles and jetties to receive us.—“War with the world, and peace with our constituents.” Be this our motto, and our principle. Then, indeed, we shall be truly great. Respecting ourselves, we shall be respected by the world. At present all is troubled, and cloudy, and distracted, and full of anger and turbulence, both abroad and at home; but the air may be cleared by this storm, and light and fertility may follow it. Let us give a faithful pledge to the people, that we honour, indeed, the crown; but that we *belong* to them; that we are their auxiliaries, and not their task-masters; the fellow-labourers in the same vineyard, not lording over their rights, but helpers of their joy: that to tax them is a grievance to ourselves: but to cut off from our enjoyment to forward theirs, is the highest gratification we are capable of receiving.—*Speech on Economical Reform.* 1780.

CONSTITUTION OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.—The late house of commons has been punished for its independence. That example is made. Have we an example on record, of a house of commons punished for its servility? The rewards of a senate so disposed are manifest to the world. Several gentlemen are very desirous of altering the constitution of the house of commons: but they must alter the

frame and constitution of human nature itself, before they can so fashion it by any mode of election, that its conduct will not be influenced by reward and punishment, by fame and by disgrace. If these examples take root in the minds of men, what members hereafter will be bold enough not to be corrupt? Especially as the king's high-way of obsequiousness is so very broad and easy. To make a passive member of parliament no dignity of mind, no principles of honour, no resolution, nor ability, no industry, no learning, no experience, are in the least degree necessary. To defend a post of importance against a powerful enemy, requires an Elliot; a drunken invalid is qualified to hoist a white flag, or to deliver up the keys of the fortress on his knees.—*Motion relative to a Speech from the Throne.* 1784.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.—First, on this head, I lay it down as a fundamental rule in the law and constitution of this country, that this house has not by itself alone a legislative authority in any case whatsoever. I know, that the contrary was the doctrine of the usurping house of commons, which threw down the fences and bulwarks of law, which annihilated first the lords, then the crown, then its constituents. But the first thing that was done on the restoration of the constitution, was to settle this point.—*Speech relative to the Middlesex Election.* 1771.

POWER OF PARLIAMENT.—I must beg leave to observe, that it is not only the invidious branch of taxation that will be resisted, but that no other given part of legislative rights can be exercised, without regard to the general opinion of those who are to be governed. That general opinion is the vehicle and

organ of legislative omnipotence. Without this, it may be a theory to entertain the mind, but it is nothing in the direction of affairs. The completeness of the legislative authority of parliament *over this kingdom* is not questioned; and yet many things indubitably included in the abstract idea of that power, and which carry no absolute injustice in themselves, yet being contrary to the opinions and feelings of the people, can as little be exercised, as if parliament in that case had been possessed of no right at all. I see no abstract reason, which can be given, why the same power, which ~~made and repealed the high-commission court and the star-chamber,~~ might not revive them again; and these courts, warned by their former fate, might possibly exercise their powers with some degree of justice. But the madness would be as unquestionable, as the competence of that parliament, which would attempt such things. If anything can be supposed out of the power of human legislature, it is religion; I admit, however, that the established religion of this country has been three or four times altered by act of parliament; and therefore that a statute binds even in that case. But we may very safely affirm, that, notwithstanding this apparent omnipotence, it would now be found as impossible for king and parliament to alter the established religion of this country, as it was to King James alone, when he attempted to make such an alteration without a parliament. In effect, to follow, not to force, the public inclination; to give a direction, a form, a technical dress, and a specific sanction, to the general sense of the community, is the true end of legislature.—*Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.* 1777.

OBJECTIONS TO THE FREQUENCY OF TRIENNIAL

PARLIAMENTS.—If I wrote merely to please the popular palate, it would indeed be as little troublesome to me as to another, to extol these remedies, so famous in speculation, but to which their greatest admirers have never attempted seriously to resort in practice. I confess, then, that I have no sort of reliance upon either a triennial parliament, or a place-bill. With regard to the former, perhaps, it might rather serve to counteract than to promote the ends that are proposed by it. To say nothing of the horrible disorders among the people attending frequent elections, I should be fearful of committing, every three years, the independent gentlemen of the country into a contest with the treasury. It is easy to see which of the contending parties would be ruined first. Whoever has taken a careful view of public proceedings, so as to endeavour to ground his speculations on his experience, must have observed how prodigiously greater the power of ministry is in the first and last session of parliament, than it is in the intermediate periods, when members sit a little firm on their seats. The persons of the greatest parliamentary experience, with whom I have conversed, did constantly, in canvassing the fate of questions, allow something to the court side, upon account of the elections depending or imminent. The evil complained of, if it exists in the present state of things, would hardly be removed by a triennial parliament: for, unless the influence of government in elections can entirely be taken away, the more frequently they return, the more they will harass private independence; the more generally men will be compelled to fly to the settled systematic interest of government, and to the resources of a boundless civil list. Cer-

tainly something may be done, and ought to be done, towards lessening that influence in elections; and this will be necessary upon a plan either of longer or shorter duration of parliament. But nothing can so perfectly remove the evil, as not to render such contentions, too frequently repeated, utterly ruinous, first to independence of fortune, and then to independence of spirit.—*Thoughts on the Cause of the present Discontents.*

EXPENSE OF TRIENNIAL PARLIAMENTS. — The charge therefore of elections ought never to be lost sight of in a question concerning their frequency; because the grand object you seek is independence. Independence of mind will ever be more or less influenced by independence of fortune; and if, every three years, the exhausting sluices of entertainments, drinkings, open houses, to say nothing of bribery, are to be periodically drawn up and renewed;—if government-favours, for which now, in some shape or other, the whole race of men are candidates, are to be called for upon every occasion, I see that private fortunes will be washed away, and every, even to the least, trace of independence borne down by the torrent. I do not seriously think this constitution, even to the wrecks of it, could survive five triennial elections.—*Speech on the Duration of Parliaments.* 1771.

INUTILITY OF TRIENNIAL PARLIAMENTS AS A CHECK UPON MEMBERS.—But they will be afraid to act ill, if they know that the day of their account is always near. I wish it were true; but it is not; here again we have experience, and experience is against us. The distemper of this age is a poverty of spirit and of genius; it is trifling, it is futile, worse than ignorant, superficially taught; with the politics and

morals of girls at a boarding-school, rather than of men and statesmen; but it is not yet desperately wicked, or so scandalously venal as in former times. Did not a triennial parliament give up the national dignity, approve the peace of Utrecht, and almost give up every thing else in taking every step to defeat the Protestant Succession? Was not the constitution saved by those, who had no election at all to go to, the lords, because the court applied to electors, and by various means carried them from their true interests; so that the Tory ministry had a majority without an application to a single member? Now as to the conduct of the members, it was then far from pure and independent. Bribery was infinitely more flagrant. A predecessor of yours, Mr. Speaker, put the question of his own expulsion for bribery. Sir William Musgrave was a wise man; a grave man; an independent man; a man of good fortune and good family; however he carried on while in opposition a traffic, a shameful traffic, with the ministry. Bishop Burnet knew of 6000*l.* which he had received at one payment. I believe the payment of sums in hard money, plain naked bribery, is rare amongst us, It was then far from uncommon.

A triennial was near ruining, a septennial parliament, saved, your constitution; nor perhaps have you ever known a more flourishing period for the union of national prosperity, dignity, and liberty, than the sixty years you have passed under that constitution of parliament.

The shortness of time, in which they are to reap the profits of iniquity, is far from checking the avidity of corrupt men; it renders them infinitely more ravenous. They rush violently and precipitately on their

object; they lose all regard to decorum. The moments of profits are precious; never are men so wicked as during a general mortality. It was so in the great plague at Athens; every symptom of which (and this its worst symptom amongst the rest) is so finely related by a great historian of antiquity. It was so in the plague of London in 1665. It appears in soldiers, sailors, &c. Whoever would contrive to render the life of man much shorter than it is, would, I am satisfied, find the surest receipt for increasing the wickedness of our nature.

Thus, in my opinion, the shortness of a triennial sitting would have the following ill effects:—It would make the member more shamelessly and shockingly corrupt; it would increase his dependence on those, who could best support him at his election; it would wrack and tear to pieces the fortunes of those who stood upon their own fortunes and their private interest; it would make the electors infinitely more venal; and it would make the whole body of the people, who are, whether they have votes or not, concerned in elections, more lawless, more idle, more debauched: it would utterly destroy the sobriety, the industry, the integrity, the simplicity of all the people; and undermine, I am much afraid, the deepest and best laid foundations of the commonwealth.—*Speech on the Duration of Parliaments.*

ADVANTAGES ARISING FROM FREQUENT VACATIONS OF PARLIAMENT.—In England we *cannot* work so hard as Frenchmen. Frequent relaxation is necessary to us. You are naturally more intense in your application. I did not know this part of your national character, until I went into France in 1773. At present, this your disposition to labour is rather increased

than lessened. In your Assembly, you do not allow yourselves a recess even on Sundays. We have two days in the week, besides the festivals; and besides, five or six months of the summer and autumn. This continued, unremitted effort of the members of your Assembly, I take to be one among the causes of the mischief they have done. They who always labour can have no true judgment. You never give yourselves time to cool. You can never survey, from its proper point of sight, the work you have finished, before you decree its final execution. You can never plan the future by the past. You never go into the country, soberly and dispassionately to observe the effect of your measures on their objects. You cannot feel distinctly how far the people are rendered better and improved, or more miserable and depraved, by what you have done. You cannot see with your own eyes the sufferings and afflictions you cause. You know them but at a distance, on the statements of those who always flatter the reigning power, and who, amidst their representations of the grievances, inflame your minds against those who are oppressed. These are amongst the effects of unremitted labour, when men exhaust their attention, burn out their candles, and are left in the dark. “*Malo meorum negligentiam, quam istorum obscuram diligentiam.*”
 —*Letter to a Member of the National Assembly.* 1791.

RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT IN MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, AND OBJECTIONS TO THEIR BEING PLEDGED TO THEIR CONSTITUENCY.—Certainly, gentlemen, it ought to be the happiness and glory of a representative to live in the strictest union, the closest correspondence, and the most unreserved communication with his constituents. Their wishes ought to have

great weight with him ; their opinion high respect ; their business unremitting attention. It is his duty to sacrifice his repose, his pleasures, his satisfactions, to theirs ; and above all, ever, and in all cases, to prefer their interest to his own. But, his unbiassed opinion, his mature judgment, his enlightened conscience, he ought not to sacrifice to you, to any man, or to any set of men living. These he does not derive from your pleasure ; no, nor from the law and the constitution. They are a trust from Providence, for the abuse of which he is deeply answerable. Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment ; which he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion.

My worthy colleague says, his will ought to be subservient to yours. If that be all, the thing is innocent. If government were a matter of will upon any side, yours, without question, ought to be superior. But government and legislation are matters of reason and judgment, and not of inclination ; and what sort of reason is that, in which the determination precedes the discussion ; in which one set of men deliberate, and another decide ; and where those who form the conclusion are perhaps three hundred miles distant from those who hear the arguments ?

To deliver an opinion, is the right of all men ; that of constituents is a weighty and respectable opinion, which a representative ought always to rejoice to hear ; and which he ought always most seriously to consider. But *authoritative* instructions ; *mandates* issued, which the member is bound blindly and implicitly to obey, to vote, and to argue for, though contrary to the clearest conviction of his judgment

and conscience,—these are things utterly unknown to the laws of this land, and which arise from a fundamental mistake of the whole order and tenor of our constitution.

Parliament is not a *congress* of ambassadors from different and hostile interests; which interests each must maintain, as an agent and advocate, against other agents and advocates; but parliament is a *deliberative* assembly of *one* nation, with *one* interest, that of the whole; where, not local purposes, not local prejudices, ought to guide, but the general good, resulting from the general reason of the whole. You choose a member, indeed; but when you have chosen him, he is not member of Bristol, but he is a member of *parliament*. If the local constituent should have an interest, or should form an hasty opinion, evidently opposite to the real good of the rest of the community, the member for that place ought to be as far as any other from any endeavour to give it effect. I beg pardon for saying so much on this subject. I have been unwillingly drawn into it; but I shall ever use a respectful frankness of communication with you. Your faithful friend, your devoted servant, I shall be to the end of my life: a flatterer you do not wish for.—*Speech to the electors on being returned for Bristol.* 1774.

Let me say with plainness, I who am no longer in a public character, that if by a fair, by an indulgent, by a gentlemanly behaviour to our representatives, we do not give confidence to their minds, and a liberal scope to their understandings; if we do not permit our members to act upon a *very* enlarged view of things; we shall at length infallibly degrade our national representation into a confused

and scuffling bustle of local agency. When the popular member is narrowed in his ideas, and rendered timid in his proceedings, the service of the crown will be the sole nursery of statesmen. Among the frolics of the court, it may at length take that of attending to its business. Then the monopoly of mental power will be added to the power of all other kinds it possesses. On the side of the people there will be nothing but impotence: for ignorance is impotence; narrowness of mind is impotence; timidity is itself impotence, and makes all other qualities that go along with it impotent and useless.—*Speech at Bristol previous to the election.* 1781.

THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION.

EFFECT OF THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION IN PRESERVING THE LOYALTY AND GOOD WILL OF THE PEOPLE.—During the reigns of the kings of Spain of the Austrian family, whenever they were at a loss in the Spanish councils, it was common for their statesmen to say, that they ought to consult the genius of Philip the Second. The genius of Philip the Second might mislead them; and the issue of their affairs shewed, that they had not chosen the most perfect standard. But, Sir, I am sure that I shall not be misled, when, in a case of constitutional difficulty, I consult the genius of the English constitution. . . . For that service, for all service, whether of revenue, trade, or empire, my trust is in her (America's) interest in the British constitution. My hold of the colonies is in the close affection which grows from common names, from kindred blood, from similar privileges, and equal protection. These are ties, which, though

light as air, are as strong as links of iron. Let the colonies always keep the idea of their civil rights associated with your government;—they will cling and grapple to you; and no force under heaven will be of power to tear them from their allegiance. But let it be once understood, that your government may be one thing, and their privileges another: that these two things may exist without any mutual relation; the cement is gone; the cohesion is loosened; and everything hastens to decay and dissolution. As long as you have the wisdom to keep the sovereign authority of this country as the sanctuary of liberty, the sacred temple consecrated to our common faith, wherever the chosen race and sons of England worship freedom, they will turn their faces towards you. The more they multiply, the more friends you will have; the more ardently they love liberty, the more perfect will be their obedience. Slavery they can have anywhere. It is a weed that grows in every soil. They may have it from Spain, they may have it from Prussia. But, until you become lost to all feeling of your true interest and your natural dignity, freedom they can have from none but you. This is the commodity of price, of which you have the monopoly. This is the true act of navigation, which binds to you the commerce of the colonies, and through them secures to you the wealth of the world. Deny them this participation of freedom, and you break that sole bond, which originally made, and must still preserve, the unity of the empire. Do not entertain so weak an imagination, as that your registers and your bonds, your affidavits and your sufferances, your cockets and your clearances, are what form the great securities of your commerce. Do not dream

that your letters of office, and your instructions, and your suspending clauses, are the things that hold together the great contexture of this mysterious whole. These things do not make your government. Dead instruments, passive tools as they are, it is the spirit of the English communion that gives all their life and efficacy to them. It is the spirit of the English constitution, which, infused through the mighty mass, pervades, feeds, unites, invigorates, vivifies every part of the empire, even down to the minutest member.

Is it not the same virtue which does everything for us here in England? Do you imagine then, that it is the land tax act which raises your revenue? that it is the annual vote in the committee of supply, which gives you your army? or that it is the mutiny bill which inspires it with bravery and discipline? No! surely no! It is the love of the people; it is their attachment to their government, from the sense of the deep stake they have in such a glorious institution, which gives you your army and your navy, and infuses into both that liberal obedience, without which your army would be a base rabble, and your navy nothing but rotten timber.

All this, I know well enough, will sound wild and chimerical to the profane herd of those vulgar and mechanical politicians, who have no place among us; a sort of people who think that nothing exists but what is gross and material; and who therefore, far from being qualified to be directors of the great movement of empire, are not fit to turn a wheel in the machine. But to men truly initiated and rightly taught, these ruling and master principles, which, in the opinion of such men as I have mentioned, have

no substantial existence, are in truth everything, and all in all. Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom; and a great empire and little minds go ill together. If we are conscious of our situation, and glow with zeal to fill our places as becomes our station and ourselves, we ought to auspicate all our public proceedings on America, with the old warning of the church, *Sursum corda!* We ought to elevate our minds to the greatness of that trust to which the order of Providence has called us. By adverting to the dignity of this high calling, our ancestors have turned a savage wilderness into a glorious empire: and have made the most extensive, and the only honourable conquests, not by destroying, but by promoting the wealth, the number, the happiness of the human race. Let us get an American revenue as we have got an American empire. English privileges have made it all that it is; English privileges alone will make it all it can be.—*Speech on Conciliation with America.* 1775.

GRADUAL FORMATION OF THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION.—The example of a wise, moral, well-natured, and well-tempered spirit of freedom, is that alone which can be useful to us, or in the least degree reputable or safe. Our fabric is so constituted, one part of it bears so much on the other, the parts are so made for one another, and for nothing else, that to introduce any foreign matter into it, is to destroy it.

What has been said of the Roman empire, is at least as true of the British constitution—“*Octingen-
torum annorum fortuna, disciplinaque, compages hæc
coahuit; quæ convelli sine convellentium exitio non
potest.*”—This British constitution has not been

struck out at a heat by a set of presumptuous men, like the assembly of pettifoggers run mad in Paris.

“’Tis not the hasty product of a day,
But the well-ripen’d fruit of wise delay.”

It is the result of the thoughts of many minds, in many ages. It is no simple, no superficial thing, nor to be estimated by superficial understandings. An ignorant man, who is not fool enough to meddle with his clock, is, however, sufficiently confident to think he can safely take to pieces, and put together at his pleasure, a moral machine of another guise, importance, and complexity, composed of far other wheels, and springs, and balances, and counteracting and co-operating powers. Men little think how immorally they act in rashly meddling with what they do not understand. Their delusive good intention is no sort of excuse for their presumption. They who truly mean well must be fearful of acting ill. The British constitution may have its advantages pointed out to wise and reflecting minds; but it is of too high an order of excellence to be adapted to those which are common. It takes in too many views, it makes too many combinations, to be so much as comprehended by shallow and superficial understandings. Profound thinkers will know it in its reason and spirit. The less enquiring will recognise it in their feelings and their experience. They will thank God they have a standard, which, in the most essential point of this great concern, will put them on a par with the most wise and knowing. . .

Place, for instance, before your eyes, such a man as Montesquieu. Think of a genius not born in every country, or every time; a man gifted by

nature with a penetrating, aquiline eye; with a judgment prepared with the most extensive erudition; with an herculean robustness of mind, and nerves not to be broken with labour; a man who could spend twenty years in one pursuit. Think of a man, like the universal patriarch in Milton (who had drawn up before him in his prophetic vision the whole series of the generations which were to issue from his loins), a man capable of placing in review, after having brought together from the east, the west, the north, and the south, from the coarseness of the rudest barbarism to the most refined and subtle civilisation, all the schemes of government which had ever prevailed amongst mankind, weighing, measuring, collating, and comparing them all, joining fact with theory, and calling into council, upon all this infinite assemblage of things, all the speculations which have fatigued the understandings of profound reasoners in all times!—Let us then consider, that all these were but so many preparatory steps to qualify a man, and such a man, tinctured with no national prejudice, with no domestic affection, to admire, and to hold out to the admiration of mankind, the constitution of England! And shall we Englishmen revoke to such a suit? Shall we, when so much more than he has produced remains still to be understood and admired, instead of keeping ourselves in the schools of real science, choose for our teachers men incapable of being taught, whose only claim to know is, that they have never doubted; from whom we can learn nothing but their own indocility; who would teach us to scorn what in the silence of our hearts we ought to adore?

Different from them are all the great critics. They have taught us one essential rule. I think the excellent and philosophic artist, a true judge, as well as a perfect follower of nature, Sir Joshua Reynolds, has somewhere applied it, or something like it, in his own profession. It is this, that if ever we should find ourselves disposed not to admire those writers or artists, Livy and Virgil for instance, Raphael or Michael Angelo, whom all the learned had admired, not to follow our own fancies, but to study them until we know how and what we ought to admire; and if we cannot arrive at this combination of admiration with knowledge, rather to believe that we are dull, than that the rest of the world has been imposed on. It is as good a rule, at least, with regard to this admired constitution. We ought to understand it according to our measure; and to venerate where we are not able presently to comprehend.

Such admirers were our fathers, to whom we owe this splendid inheritance. Let us improve it with zeal, but with fear. Let us follow our ancestors, men not without a rational, though without an exclusive, confidence in themselves; who, by respecting the reason of others, who, by looking backward as well as forward, by the modesty as well as by the energy of their minds, went on, insensibly drawing this constitution nearer and nearer to its perfection, by never departing from its fundamental principles, nor introducing any amendment which had not a subsisting root in the laws, constitution, and usages of the kingdom. Let those who have the trust of political or of natural authority ever keep watch against the desperate enterprises of innovation: let

even their benevolence be fortified and armed.
—*Appeal from the new to the old Whigs.* 1791.

ADVANTAGES ATTENDANT ON THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION.—My next example is Wales. This country was said to be reduced by Henry the Third. It was said more truly to be so by Edward the First. But though then conquered, it was not looked upon as any part of the realm of England. Its old constitution, whatever that might have been, was destroyed; and no good one was substituted in its place. The care of that tract was put into the hands of lords marchers—a form of government of a very singular kind; a strange heterogeneous monster, something between hostility and government; perhaps it has a sort of resemblance, according to the modes of those times, to that of commander-in-chief at present, to whom all civil power is granted as secondary. The manners of the Welsh nation followed the genius of the government; the people were ferocious, restive, savage, and uncultivated; sometimes composed, never pacified. Wales, within itself, was in perpetual disorder; and it kept the frontier of England in perpetual alarm. Benefits from it to the state there were none. Wales was only known to England by incursion and invasion.

Sir, during that state of things, parliament was not idle. They attempted to subdue the fierce spirit of the Welsh by all sorts of rigorous laws. They prohibited by statute the sending all sorts of arms into Wales, as you prohibit by proclamation (with something more of doubt on the legality) the sending arms to America. They disarmed the Welsh by statute, as you attempted (but still with more question on the legality) to disarm New England by an

instruction. They made an act to drag offenders from Wales into England for trial, as you have done (but with more hardship) with regard to America. By another act, where one of the parties was an Englishman, they ordained, that his trial should be always by English. They made acts to restrain trade, as you do; and they prevented the Welsh from the use of fairs and markets, as you do the Americans from fisheries and foreign ports. In short, when the statute-book was not quite so much swelled as it is now, you find no less than fifteen acts of penal regulation on the subject of Wales.

Here we rub our hands—A fine body of precedents for the authority of parliament and the use of it!—I admit it fully; and pray add likewise to those precedents, that all the while, Wales rode this kingdom like an *incubus*; that it was an unprofitable and oppressive burthen; and that an Englishman travelling in that country could not go six yards from the high road without being murdered.

The march of the human mind is slow. Sir, it was not, until after two hundred years, discovered, that, by an eternal law, Providence had decreed vexation to violence; and poverty to rapine. Your ancestors did however at length open their eyes to the ill husbandry of injustice. They found that the tyranny of a free people could, of all tyrannies, the least be endured; and that laws made against a whole nation were not the most effectual methods for securing its obedience. Accordingly, in the twenty-seventh year of Henry VIII.; the course was entirely altered. With a preamble stating the entire and perfect rights of the crown of England, it gave to the Welsh all the rights and privileges of English sub-

jects. A political order was established ; the military power gave way to the civil ; the marches were turned into counties. But that a nation should have a right to English liberties, and yet no share at all in the fundamental security of these liberties—the grant of their own property—seemed a thing so incongruous, that, eight years after, that is, in the thirty-fifth of that reign, a complete and not ill-proportioned representation by counties and boroughs was bestowed upon Wales, by act of Parliament. From that moment, as by a charm, the tumults subsided ; obedience was restored ; peace, order, and civilization, followed in the train of liberty—When the day-star of the English constitution had arisen in their hearts, all was harmony within and without—

—Simul alba nautis
 Stella refulsit
 Defluit saxis agitatus humor ;
 Concidunt venti, fugiuntque nubes,
 Et minax (quòd sic voluere) ponto
 Unda recumbit.

—*Speech on Conciliation with America.* 1775.

The British state is, without question, that which pursues the greatest variety of ends, and is the least disposed to sacrifice any one of them to another, or to the whole. It aims at taking in the entire circle of human desires, and securing for them their fair enjoyment. Our legislature has been ever closely connected, in its most efficient part, with individual feeling and individual interest. Personal liberty, the most lively of these feelings, and the most important of these interests, which in other European countries has rather arisen from the system of manners and the habitudes of life, than from the laws of state (in

which it flourished more from neglect than attention), in England, has been a direct object of government. —*Letters on a Regicide Peace.* 1796.

CAUTION TO BE OBSERVED IN REFORMING THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION.—Whatever they are, I wish my countrymen rather to recommend to our neighbours the example of the British constitution, than to take models from them for the improvement of our own. In the former they have got an invaluable treasure. They are not, I think, without some causes of apprehension and complaint: but these they do not owe to their constitution, but to their own conduct. I think our happy situation owing to our constitution; but owing to the whole of it, and not to any part singly; owing in a great measure to what we have left standing in our several reviews and reformations, as well as to what we have altered or super-added. Our people will find employment enough for a truly patriotic, free, and independent spirit, in guarding what they possess from violation. I would not exclude alteration neither; but even when I changed, it should be to preserve. I should be led to my remedy by a great grievance. In what I did, I should follow the example of our ancestors. I would make the reparation as nearly as possible in the style of the building. A politic caution, a guarded circumspection, a moral rather than a complexional timidity, were among the ruling principles of our forefathers in their most decided conduct. Not being illuminated with the light of which the gentlemen of France tell us they have got so abundant a share, they acted under a strong impression of the ignorance and fallibility of mankind. He that had made them thus fallible, rewarded them for having

in their conduct attended to their nature. Let us imitate their caution, if we wish to deserve their fortune, or to retain their bequests. Let us add, if we please, but let us preserve what they have left; and, standing on the firm ground of the British constitution, let us be satisfied to admire, rather than attempt to follow in their desperate flights the aeronauts of France.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.* 1790.

OUR SECURITY DEPENDING ON THE PRESERVATION OF THE CONSTITUTION ENTIRE.—Such are *their* ideas; such *their* religion, and such *their* law. But as to *our* country and *our* race, as long as the well-compacted structure of our church and state, the sanctuary, the holy of holies of that ancient law, defended by reverence, defended by power, a fortress at once and a temple—shall stand inviolate on the brow of the British Sion—as long as the British monarchy, not more limited than fenced by the orders of the state, shall, like the proud Keep of Windsor, rising in the majesty of proportion, and girt with the double belt of its kindred and coeval towers; as long as this awful structure shall oversee and guard the subjected land—so long the mounds and dykes of the low, flat Bedford level will have nothing to fear from all the pick-axes of all the levellers of France. As long as our sovereign lord the king, and his faithful subjects, the lords and commons of this realm,—the triple cord, which no man can break; the solemn, sworn, constitutional frank-pledge of this nation; the firm guarantees of each other's being, and each other's rights; the joint and several securities, each in its place and order, for every kind and every quality, of property and of dignity:—as long as these

endure, so long the Duke of Bedford is safe : and we are all safe together—the high from blights of envy and the spoliations of rapacity : the low from the iron hand of oppression and the insolent spurn of contempt. Amen ! and so be it : and so it will be,

Dum domus Æneæ Capitoli immobile saxum
Accolet ; imperiumque pater Romanus habebit.—

—*Letter to a noble lord (the Duke of Bedford), 1796.*

CHAPTER II.

AMERICA AND THE AMERICAN WAR.

—◆—

Ventum ad supremum est. Terris agitare vel undis
Trojanos potuisti, infandum accendere bellum,
Deformare domum, et luctu miscere hymenæos : -
Ulterius tentare veto.—VIRGIL.

BRITISH AMERICA.

VISION OF THE GREATNESS OF THE BRITISH COLONIES IN AMERICA.—Mr. Speaker, I cannot prevail on myself to hurry over this great consideration. It is good for us to be here. We stand where we have an immense view of what is, and what is past. Clouds, indeed, and darkness rest upon the future. Let us, however, before we descend from this noble eminence, reflect that this growth of our national prosperity has happened within the short period of the life of man. It has happened within sixty-eight years. There are those alive whose memory might touch the two extremities. For instance, my Lord Bathurst might remember all the stages of the progress. He was in 1704 of an age at least to be made to comprehend such things. He was then old enough *acta parentum jam legere, et quæ sit poterit cognoscere virtus*.—Suppose, Sir, that the angel of this auspicious youth, foreseeing the many virtues, which made him one of the most amiable, as he is one of the most fortunate, men of his age, had opened to him in vision, that, when, in the fourth generation,

the third prince of the house of Brunswick had sat twelve years on the throne of that nation, which (by the happy issue of moderate and healing councils) was to be made Great Britain, he should see his son, Lord Chancellor of England, turn back the current of hereditary dignity to its fountain, and raise him to a higher rank of peerage, whilst he enriched the family with a new one. If amidst these bright and happy scenes of domestic honor and prosperity, that angel should have drawn up the curtain, and unfolded the rising glories of his country, and whilst he was gazing with admiration on the then commercial grandeur of England, the genius should point out to him a little speck, scarce visible in the mass of the national interest, a small seminal principle rather than a formed body, and should tell him, "Young man, there is America, which at this day serves for little more than to amuse you with stories of savage men and uncouth manners; yet shall, before you taste of death, show itself equal to the whole of that commerce which now attracts the envy of the world. Whatever England has been growing to by a progressive increase of improvement, brought on by varieties of people, by succession of civilising conquests and civilising settlements in a series of seventeen hundred years, you shall see as much added to her by America in the course of a single life." If this state of his country had been foretold to him, would it not require all the sanguine credulity of youth, and all the fervid glow of enthusiasm, to make him believe it? Fortunate man, he has lived to see it! Fortunate indeed if he lives to see nothing that shall vary the prospect, and cloud the setting of his day!—*Speech on Conciliation with America.* 1775.

RAPID ADVANCE OF THE BRITISH COLONIES IN AMERICA.—Nothing in the history of mankind is like their progress. For my part, I never cast an eye on their flourishing commerce, and their cultivated and commodious life, but they seem to me rather ancient nations, grown to perfection through a long series of fortunate events, and a train of successful industry, accumulating wealth in many centuries, than the colonies of yesterday; than a set of miserable outcasts, a few years ago, not so much sent as thrown out, on the bleak and barren shore of a desolate wilderness, three thousand miles from all civilized intercourse.—*Speech on American Taxation.* 1774.

The first thing that we have to consider with regard to the nature of the object is—the number of people in the colonies. I have taken for some years a good deal of pains on that point. I can by no calculation justify myself in placing the number below two millions of inhabitants of our own European blood and colour; besides at least 500,000 others, who form no inconsiderable part of the strength and opulence of the whole. This, Sir, is, I believe, about the true number. There is no occasion to exaggerate, where plain truth is of so much weight and importance. But, whether I put the present numbers too high or too low is a matter of little moment. Such is the strength with which population shoots in that part of the world, that state the numbers as high as we will, whilst the dispute continues the exaggeration ends. Whilst we are discussing any given magnitude, they are grown to it. Whilst we spend our time in deliberating on the mode of governing two millions, we shall find we

have millions more to manage. Your children do not grow faster from infancy to manhood, than they spread from families to communities, and from villages to nations.—*Speech on Conciliation with America.* 1775.

THE FREE SPIRIT OF THE BRITISH AMERICAN COLONIES.—In this character of the Americans, a love of freedom is the predominating feature which marks and distinguishes the whole: and, as an ardent is always a jealous affection, your colonies become suspicious, restive, and untractable, whenever they see the least attempt to wrest from them by force, or shuffle from them by chicane, what they think the only advantage worth living for. This fierce spirit of liberty is stronger in the English colonies, probably, than in any other people of the earth; and this from a great variety of powerful causes; which, to understand the true temper of their minds, and the direction which this spirit takes, it will not be amiss to lay open somewhat more largely.

First, the people of the colonies are descendants of Englishmen. England, Sir, is a nation, which still, I hope, respects, and formerly adored, her freedom. The colonists emigrated from you when this part of your character was most predominant; and they took this bias and direction the moment they parted from your hands. They are therefore not only devoted to liberty, but to liberty according to English ideas, and on English principles. Abstract liberty, like other mere abstractions, is not to be found. Liberty inheres in some sensible object; and every nation has formed to itself some favourite point, which by way of eminence becomes the criterion of their happiness. It happened, you know, Sir, that the great

contests for freedom in this country were from the earliest times chiefly upon the question of taxing. Most of the contests in the ancient commonwealths turned primarily on the right of election of magistrates ; or on the balance among the several orders of the state. The question of money was not with them so immediate. But in England it was otherwise. On this point of taxes the ablest pens, and most eloquent tongues, have been exercised ; the greatest spirits have acted and suffered. In order to give the fullest satisfaction concerning the importance of this point, it was not only necessary for those who in argument defended the excellence of the English constitution, to insist on this privilege of granting money as a dry point of fact, and to prove that the right had been acknowledged in ancient parchments, and blind usages, to reside in a certain body called a house of commons. They went much farther ; they attempted to prove, and they succeeded, that in theory it ought to be so, from the particular nature of a house of commons, as an immediate representative of the people ; whether the old records had delivered this oracle or not. They took infinite pains to inculcate, as a fundamental principle, that in all monarchies the people must in effect themselves, mediately or immediately, possess the power of granting their own money, or no shadow of liberty could subsist. The colonies draw from you, as with their life-blood, these ideas and principles. Their love of liberty, as with you, fixed and attached on this specific point of taxing. Liberty might be safe, or might be endangered, in twenty other particulars, without their being much pleased or alarmed. Here they felt its pulse ; and as they found that beat,

they thought themselves sick or sound. I do not say whether they were right or wrong in applying your general arguments to their own case. It is not easy, indeed, to make a monopoly of theorems and corollaries. The fact is, that they did thus apply those general arguments; and your mode of governing them, whether through lenity or indolence, through wisdom or mistake, confirmed them in the imagination, that they, as well as you, had an interest in these common principles.

They were further confirmed in this pleasing error by the form of their provincial legislative assemblies. Their governments are popular in a high degree; some are merely popular; in all, the popular representative is the most weighty; and this share of the people in their ordinary government never fails to inspire them with lofty sentiments, and with a strong aversion from whatever tends to deprive them of their chief importance. The temper and character which prevail in our colonies are, I am afraid, unalterable by any human art. We cannot, I fear, falsify the pedigree of this fierce people, and persuade them that they are not sprung from a nation in whose veins the blood of freedom circulates. The language in which they would hear you tell them this tale would detect the imposition; your speech would betray you. An Englishman is the unfittest person on earth to argue another Englishman into slavery.—*Speech on Conciliation with America.*

ANSWER TO THE PLAN OF SUSPENDING THE CROWN GRANTS OF LAND IN AMERICA.—As the growing population of the colonies is evidently one cause of their resistance, it was last session mentioned in both houses, by men of weight, and received not

without applause, that in order to check this evil, it would be proposed for the crown to make no further grants of land. But to this scheme there are two objections. The first, that there is already so much unsettled land in private hands as to afford room for an immense future population, although the crown not only withheld its grants, but annihilated its soil. If this be the case, then the only effect of this avarice of desolation, this hoarding of a royal wilderness, would be to raise the value of the possessions in the hands of the great private monopolists, without any adequate check to the growing and alarming mischief of population.

But if you stop your grants, what would be the consequence? The people would occupy without grants. They have already so occupied in many places. You cannot station garrisons in every part of these deserts. If you drive the people from one place, they will carry on their annual tillage, and remove with their flocks and herds to another. Many of the people in the back settlements are already little attached to particular situations. Already they have topped the Apalachian mountains. From thence they behold before them an immense plain, one vast, rich, level meadow; a square of five hundred miles. Over this they would wander without a possibility of restraint; they would change their manners with the habits of their life; would soon forget a government by which they were disowned; would become hordes of English Tartars; and pouring down upon your unfortified frontiers a fierce and irresistible cavalry, become masters of your governors and your councillors, your collectors and comptrollers, and of all the slaves that adhered to them. Such would, and,

in no long time, must be, the effect of attempting to forbid as a crime, and to suppress as an evil, the command and blessing of Providence, "Increase and multiply." Such would be the happy result of an endeavour to keep as a lair of wild beasts, that earth, which God, by an express charter, has given to the children of men. Far different, and surely much wiser, has been our policy hitherto. Hitherto we have invited our people, by every kind of bounty, to fixed establishments. We have invited the husbandman to look to authority for his title. We have taught him piously to believe in the mysterious virtue of wax and parchment. We have thrown each tract of land, as it was peopled, into districts; that the ruling power should never be wholly out of sight. We have settled all we could; and we have carefully attended every settlement with government.

Adhering, Sir, as I do, to this policy, as well as for the reasons I have just given, I think this new project of hedging-in population to be neither prudent nor practicable.

To impoverish the colonies in general, and in particular to arrest the noble course of their marine enterprises, would be a more easy task, I freely confess it. We have shewn a disposition to a system of this kind; a disposition even to continue the restraint after the offence; looking on ourselves as rivals to our colonies, and persuaded that of course we must gain all that they shall lose. Much mischief we may certainly do. The power inadequate to all other things is often more than sufficient for this. I do not look on the direct and immediate power of the colonies to resist our violence as very formidable. In this, however, I may be mistaken. But when I

consider, that we have colonies for no purpose but to be serviceable to us, it seems to my poor understanding a little preposterous, to make them unserviceable, in order to keep them obedient. It is, in truth, nothing more than the old, and, as I thought, exploded problem of tyranny, which proposes to beggar its subjects into submission. But remember, when you have completed your system of impoverishment, that nature still proceeds in her ordinary course; that discontent will increase with misery; and that there are critical moments in the fortune of all states, when they who are too weak to contribute to your prosperity, may be strong enough to complete your ruin. *Spoliatis arma supersunt.*—*Speech on Conciliation with America.*

FISHERIES IN AMERICA.—As to the wealth which the colonies have drawn from the sea by their fisheries, you had all that matter fully opened at your bar. You surely thought those acquisitions of value, for they seemed even to excite your envy: and yet the spirit by which that enterprising employment has been exercised, ought rather, in my opinion, to have raised your esteem and admiration. And pray, Sir, what in the world is equal to it? Pass by the other parts, and look at the manner in which the people of New England have of late carried on the whale fishery. Whilst we follow them among the tumbling mountains of ice, and behold them penetrating into the deepest frozen recesses of Hudson's Bay and Davis's Straits, whilst we are looking for them beneath the arctic circle, we hear that they have pierced into the opposite region of polar cold; that they are at the antipodes, and engaged under the frozen serpent of the south. Falkland Island, which

seemed too remote and romantic an object for the grasp of national ambition, is but a stage and resting-place in the progress of their victorious industry. Nor is the equinoctial heat more discouraging to them, than the accumulated winter of both the poles. We know that whilst some of them draw the line and strike the harpoon on the coast of Africa, others run the longitude, and pursue their gigantic game along the coast of Brazil. No sea but what is vexed by their fisheries; no climate that is not witness to their toils. Neither the perseverance of Holland, nor the activity of France, nor the dexterous and firm sagacity of English enterprise, ever carried this most perilous mode of hard industry to the extent to which it has been pushed by this recent people; a people who are still, as it were, but in the gristle, and not yet hardened into the bone of manhood. When I contemplate these things; when I know that the colonies in general owe little or nothing to any care of ours, and that they are not squeezed into this happy form by the constraints of watchful and suspicious government, but that, through a wise and salutary neglect, a generous nature has been suffered to take her own way to perfection; when I reflect upon these effects, when I see how profitable they have been to us, I feel all the pride of power sink, and all presumption in the wisdom of human contrivances melt, and die away within me. My rigour relents. I pardon something to the spirit of liberty, —*Speech on Conciliation with America.*

TAXATION OF THE COLONIES.—Again, and again, revert to your old principles—seek peace and ensure it—leave America, if she has taxable matter in her, to tax herself. I am not here going into the distinc-

tions of rights, not attempting to mark their boundaries. I do not enter into these metaphysical distinctions; I hate the very sound of them. Leave the Americans as they anciently stood, and these distinctions, born of our unhappy contest, will die along with it. They and we, and their and our ancestors, have been happy under that system. Let the memory of all actions, in contradiction to that good old mode, on both sides, be extinguished for ever. Be content to bind America by laws of trade; you have always done it. Let this be your reason for binding their trade. Do not burthen them by taxes; you were not used to do so from the beginning. Let this be your reason for not taxing. These are the arguments of states and kingdoms. Leave the rest to the schools; for there only they may be discussed with safety. But if, intemperately, unwisely, fatally, you sophisticate and poison the very source of government, by urging subtle deductions, and consequences odious to those you govern, from the unlimited and illimitable nature of supreme sovereignty, you will teach them by these means to call that sovereignty itself in question. When you drive him hard, the boar will surely turn upon the hunters. If that sovereignty and their freedom cannot be reconciled, which will they take? They will cast your sovereignty in your face. Nobody will be argued into slavery. Sir, let the gentlemen on the other side call forth all their ability; let the best of them get up, and tell me, what one character of liberty the Americans have, and what one brand of slavery they are free from, if they are bound in their property and industry, by all the restraints you can imagine on commerce, and at the same time are made

pack-horses of every tax you choose to impose, without the least share in granting them. When they bear the burthens of unlimited monopoly, will you bring them to bear the burthens of unlimited revenue too? The Englishman in America will feel that this is slavery—that it is *legal* slavery, will be no compensation, either to his feelings or his understanding.

A noble lord,* who spoke some time ago, is full of the fire of ingenuous youth; and when he has modelled the ideas of a lively imagination by further experience, he will be an ornament to his country in either house. He has said, that the Americans are our children, and how can they revolt against their parent? He says, that if they are not free in their present state, England is not free; because Manchester, and other considerable places, are not represented. So then, because some towns in England are not represented, America is to have no representative at all. They are “our children;” but when children ask for bread we are not to give a stone. Is it because the natural resistance of things, and the various mutations of time, hinder our government, or any scheme of government, from being any more than a sort of approximation to the right, is it therefore that the colonies are to recede from it infinitely? When this child of ours wishes to assimilate to its parent, and to reflect with a true filial resemblance the beauteous countenance of British liberty; are we to turn to them the shameful parts of our constitution? are we to give them our weakness for their strength? our opprobrium for their glory? and the slough of slavery, which we are not able to work off, to serve them for their freedom?

* Lord Carmarthen.

If this be the case, ask yourselves this question, Will they be content in such a state of slavery? If not, look to the consequences. Reflect how you are to govern a people, who think they ought to be free, and think they are not. Your scheme yields no revenue; it yields nothing but discontent, disorder, disobedience; and such is the state of America, that after wading up to your eyes in blood, you could only end just where you began; that is, to tax where no revenue is to be found, to—my voice fails me; my inclination indeed carries me no farther—all is confusion beyond it.

Well, sir, I have recovered a little, and before I sit down I must say something to another point with which gentlemen urge us. What is to become of the declaratory-act asserting the entireness of British legislative authority, if we abandon the practice of taxation?

For my part I look upon the rights stated in that act, exactly in the manner in which I viewed them on its very first proposition, and which I have often taken the liberty, with great humility, to lay before you. I look, I say, on the imperial rights of Great Britain, and the privileges which the colonists ought to enjoy under these rights, to be just the most reconcilable things in the world. The parliament of Great Britain sits at the head of her extensive empire in two capacities: one as the local legislature of this island, providing for all things at home, immediately, and by no other instrument than the executive power.—The other, and I think her nobler capacity, is what I call her *imperial character*; in which, as from the throne of heaven, she superintends all the several inferior legislatures, and guides and controls them

all, without annihilating any. As all these provincial legislatures are only co-ordinate with each other, they ought all to be subordinate to her; else they can neither preserve mutual peace, nor hope for mutual justice, nor effectually afford mutual assistance. It is necessary to coerce the negligent, to restrain the violent, and to aid the weak and deficient, by the overruling plenitude of her power. She is never to intrude into the place of the others, whilst they are equal to the common ends of their institution. But in order to enable parliament to answer all these ends of provident and beneficent superintendence, her powers must be boundless. The gentlemen who think the powers of parliament limited, may please themselves to talk of requisitions. But suppose the requisitions are not obeyed? What! Shall there be no reserved power in the empire, to supply a deficiency which may weaken, divide, and dissipate the whole? We are engaged in war—the secretary of state calls upon the colonies to contribute—some would do it, I think most would cheerfully furnish whatever is demanded—one or two, suppose, hang back, and, easing themselves, let the stress of the draught lie on the others—surely it is proper, that some authority might legally say—“Tax yourselves for the common supply, or parliament will do it for you.” This backwardness was, as I am told, actually the case of Pennsylvania for some short time towards the beginning of the last war, owing to some internal dissensions in the colony. But whether the fact were so, or otherwise, the case is equally to be provided for by a competent sovereign power. But then this ought to be no ordinary power; nor ever used in the first instance. This is what I meant, when I

have said at various times, that I consider the power of taxing in parliament as an instrument of empire, and not as a means of supply.

Such, sir, is my idea of the constitution of the British empire, as distinguished from the constitution of Britain; and on these grounds I think subordination and liberty may be sufficiently reconciled through the whole; whether to serve a refining speculatist, or a factious demagogue, I know not; but enough surely for the ease and happiness of man.

Sir, whilst we held this happy course, we drew more from the colonies than all the impotent violence of despotism ever could extort from them. We did this abundantly in the last war. It has never been once denied—and what reason have we to imagine that the colonies would not have proceeded in supplying government as liberally, if you had not stepped in and hindered them from contributing, by interrupting the channel in which their liberality flowed with so strong a course; by attempting to take, instead of being satisfied to receive? Sir William Temple says, that Holland has loaded itself with ten times the impositions which it revolted from Spain rather than submit to. He says true. Tyranny is a poor provider. It knows neither how to accumulate nor how to extract. Could anything be a subject of more just alarm to America, than to see you go out of the plain high road of finance, and give up your most certain revenues and your clearest interests, merely for the sake of insulting your colonies? No man ever doubted that the commodity of tea could bear an imposition of three-pence. But no commodity will bear three-pence, or will bear a penny, when the general feelings of men are irritated, and two

millions of people are resolved not to pay. The feelings of the colonies were formerly the feelings of Great Britain. Theirs were formerly the feelings of Mr. Hampden when called upon for the payment of twenty shillings. Would twenty shillings have ruined Mr. Hampden's fortune? No, but the payment of half twenty shillings, on the principle it was demanded, would have made him a slave. It is the weight of that preamble, of which you are so fond, and not the weight of the duty that the Americans are unable and unwilling to bear. — *Speech on American Taxation.*

But what (says the financier) is peace to us without money? Your plan gives us no revenue. No! But it does—For it secures to the subject the power of REFUSAL! the first of all revenues. Experience is a cheat, and fact a liar, if this power in the subject of proportioning his grant, or of not granting at all, has not been found the richest mine of revenue ever discovered by the skill or by the fortune of man. It does not indeed vote you £152,752 : 11 : 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ ths, nor any other paltry limited sum.—But it gives the strong box itself, the fund, the bank, from whence only revenues can arise amongst a people sensible of freedom: *Posita luditur arca.* Cannot you in England; cannot you at this time of day; cannot you, a house of commons, trust to the principle which has raised so mighty a revenue, and accumulated a debt of near 140 millions in this country? Is this principle to be true in England, and false everywhere else? Is it not true in Ireland? Has it not hitherto been true in the colonies? Why should you presume, that, in any country, a body duly constituted for any function, will neglect to

perform its duty, and abdicate its trust? Such a presumption would go against all governments in all modes. But, in truth, this dread of penury of supply, from a free assembly, has no foundation in nature. For first observe, that besides the desire which all men have naturally of supporting the honour of their own government, that sense of dignity, and that security to property, which ever attend freedom, have a tendency to increase the stock of the free community. Most may be taken where most is accumulated. And what is the soil or climate where experience has not uniformly proved that, the voluntary flow of heaped-up plenty, bursting from the weight of its own rich luxuriance, has ever run with a more copious stream of revenue, than could be squeezed from the dry husks of oppressed indigence, by the straining of all the politic machinery in the world.—*Speech on Conciliation with America.*

SMALLNESS IN AMOUNT OF WRONG TAXATION, NO EXCUSE FOR IT.—They will deny that the Americans were ever “touched and grieved” with the taxes. If they consider nothing in taxes but their weight as pecuniary impositions, there might be some pretence for this denial. But men may be sorely touched and deeply grieved in their privileges, as well as in their purses. Men may lose little in property by the act which takes away all their freedom. When a man is robbed of a trifle on the highway, it is not the two-pence lost that constitutes the capital outrage. This is not confined to privileges. Even ancient indulgences withdrawn, without offence on the part of those who enjoyed such favours, operate as grievances.—*Speech on Conciliation with America.*

A PRACTICAL PREFERABLE TO A THEORETIC VIEW OF AMERICAN TAXATION.—Sir, I think you must perceive, that I am resolved this day to have nothing at all to do with the question of the right of taxation. Some gentlemen startle—but it is true; I put it totally out of the question. It is less than nothing in my consideration. I do not indeed wonder, nor will you, sir, that gentlemen of profound learning are fond of displaying it on this profound subject. But my consideration is narrow, confined, and wholly limited to the policy of the question. I do not examine, whether the giving away a man's money be a power excepted and reserved out of the general trust of government; and how far all mankind, in all forms of polity, are entitled to an exercise of that right by the charter of nature. Or whether, on the contrary, a right of taxation is necessarily involved in the general principle of legislation, and inseparable from the ordinary supreme power. These are deep questions, where great names militate against each other; where reason is perplexed; and an appeal to authorities only thickens the confusion. For high and reverend authorities lift up their heads on both sides; and there is no sure footing in the middle. This point is the *great Serbonian bog, betwixt Damietta and Mount Casius old, where armies whole have sunk*. I do not intend to be overwhelmed in that bog, though in such respectable company. The question with me is, not whether you have a right to render your people miserable; but whether it is not your interest to make them happy. It is not, what a lawyer tells me I *may* do; but what humanity, reason, and justice, tell me I ought to do. Is a politic act the worse for being a generous one? Is no conces-

sion proper, but that which is made from your want of right to keep what you grant? Or does it lessen the grace or dignity of relaxing in the exercise of an odious claim, because you have your evidence-room full of titles, and your magazines stuffed with arms to enforce them? What signify all those titles, and all those arms? Of what avail are they, when the reason of the thing tells me, that the assertion of my title is the loss of my suit; and that I could do nothing but wound myself by the use of my own weapons?—*Speech on Conciliation with America.*

THE AMERICAN WAR.

EXORDIUM OF THE SPEECH FOR CONCILIATION WITH AMERICA.—I felt the truth of what my honourable friend represented; but I felt my situation too. His application might have been made with far greater propriety to many other gentlemen. No man was indeed ever better disposed, or worse qualified, for such an undertaking, than myself. Though I gave so far into his opinion, that I immediately threw my thoughts into a sort of parliamentary form, I was by no means equally ready to produce them. It generally argues some degree of natural impotence of mind, or some want of knowledge of the world, to hazard plans of government except from a seat of authority. Propositions are made, not only ineffectually, but somewhat disreputably, when the minds of men are not properly disposed for their reception; and for my part, I am not ambitious of ridicule; not absolutely a candidate for disgrace.

Besides, sir, to speak the plain truth, I have in general no very exalted opinion of the virtue of paper government; nor of any politics in which the

plan is to be wholly separated from the execution. But when I saw that anger and violence prevailed every day more and more; and that things were hastening towards an incurable alienation of our colonies; I confess my caution gave way. I felt this, as one of those few moments in which decorum yields to a higher duty. Public calamity is a mighty leveller; and there are occasions when any, even the slightest chance of doing good, must be laid hold on, even by the most inconsiderable person.

To restore order and repose to an empire so great and so distracted as ours, is, merely in the attempt, an undertaking that would ennoble the flights of the highest genius, and obtain pardon for the efforts of the meanest understanding. Struggling a good while with these thoughts, by degrees I felt myself more firm. I derived, at length, some confidence from what in other circumstances usually produces timidity. I grew less anxious, even from the idea of my own insignificance. For, judging of what you are, by what you ought to be, I persuaded myself that you would not reject a reasonable proposition because it had nothing but its reason to recommend it. On the other hand, being totally destitute of all shadow of influence, natural or adventitious, I was very sure, that, if my proposition were futile or dangerous; if it were weakly conceived, or improperly timed, there was nothing exterior to it, of power to awe, dazzle, or delude you. You will see it just as it is; and you will treat it just as it deserves.

The proposition is peace. Not peace through the medium of war; not peace to be hunted through the labyrinth of intricate and endless negotiations; not peace to arise out of universal discord, fomented

from principle, in all parts of the empire ; not peace to depend on the juridical determination of perplexing questions, or the precise marking the shadowy boundaries of a complex government. It is simple peace ; sought in its natural course, and in its ordinary haunts.—It is peace sought in the spirit of peace ; and laid in principles purely pacific. I propose, by removing the ground of the difference, and by restoring the *former unsuspecting confidence of the colonies in the mother country*, to give permanent satisfaction to your people ; and (far from a scheme of ruling by discord) to reconcile them to each other in the same act, and by the bond of the very same interest which reconciles them to British government.

My idea is nothing more. Refined policy ever has been the parent of confusion ; and ever will be so, as long as the world endures. Plain good intention, which is as easily discovered at the first view, as fraud is surely detected at last, is, let me say, of no mean force in the government of mankind. Genuine simplicity of heart is a healing and cementing principle. My plan, therefore, being formed upon the most simple grounds imaginable, may disappoint some people, when they hear it. It has nothing to recommend it to the pruriency of curious ears. There is nothing at all new and captivating in it. It has nothing of the splendour of the project, which has been lately laid upon your table by the noble lord in the blue riband. It does not propose to fill your lobby with squabbling colony agents, who will require the interposition of your mace, at every instant, to keep the peace amongst them. It does not institute a magnificent auction of finance, where capti-

vated provinces come to general ransom by bidding against each other, until you knock down the hammer, and determine a proportion of payments beyond all the powers of algebra to equalise and settle.

SIMPLICITY OF THE PROPOSED ARTICLES OF PEACE WITH AMERICA.—Fortunately I am not obliged for the ways and means of this substitute to tax my own unproductive invention. I am not even obliged to go to the rich treasury of the fertile framers of imaginary commonwealths; and not to the republic of Plato; not to the Utopia of Moore; not to the Oceana of Harrington. It is before me—it is at my feet, *and the rude swain treads daily on it with his clouted shoon*. I only wish you to recognise, for the theory, the ancient constitutional policy of this kingdom with regard to representation, as that policy has been declared in acts of parliament; and as to the practice, to return to that mode which an uniform experience has marked out to you, as best; and in which you walked with security, advantage, and honour, until the year 1763 Is this description too hot or too cold, too strong or too weak? Does it arrogate too much to the supreme legislature? Does it lean too much to the claims of the people? If it runs into any of these errors, the fault is not mine. It is the language of your own ancient acts of parliament.

Non meus hic sermo, sed quæ præcepit Ofellus,
Rusticus, abnormis sapiens.

It is the genuine produce of the ancient, rustic, manly, home-bred sense of this country.—I did not dare to rub off a particle of the venerable rust that

rather adorns and preserves, than destroys, the metal. It would be a profanation to touch with a tool the stones which construct the sacred altar of peace. I would not violate with modern polish the ingenuous and noble roughness of these truly constitutional materials. Above all things, I was resolved not to be guilty of tampering: the odious vice of restless and unstable minds. I put my foot in the tracks of our forefathers; where I can neither wander nor stumble. Determining to fix articles of peace, I was resolved not to be wise beyond what was written; I was resolved to use nothing else than the form of sound words; to let others abound in their own sense; and carefully to abstain from all expressions of my own. What the law has said, I say. In all things else I am silent. I have no organ but for her words. This, if it be not ingenious, I am sure is safe.—*Speech on Conciliation with America.* 1775.

MISERY OF THE WAR IN BRITISH AMERICA.—This American war, that era of calamity, disgrace, and downfall, an era which no feeling mind will ever mention without a tear for England.—*Speech at Bristol previous to the Election.* 1780.

MODE OF RECONCILIATION WITH AMERICA.—I think I know America. If I do not, my ignorance is incurable, for I have spared no pains to understand it; and I do most solemnly assure those of my constituents who put any sort of confidence in my industry and integrity, that everything that has been done there has arisen from a total misconception of the object; that our means of originally holding America, that our means of reconciling with it after quarrel, of recovering it after separation, of keeping it after victory, did depend, and must depend in

their several stages and periods, upon a total renunciation of that unconditional submission, which has taken such possession of the minds of violent men. The whole of those maxims, upon which we have made and continued this war, must be abandoned. Nothing indeed (for I would not deceive you) can place us in our former situation. That hope must be laid aside. But there is a difference between bad and the worst of all. Terms relative to the cause of the war ought to be offered by the authority of parliament. An arrangement at home promising some security for them ought to be made. By doing this, without the least impairing of our strength, we add to the credit of our moderation, which, in itself, is always strength more or less.

I know many have been taught to think, that moderation, in a case like this, is a sort of treason ; and that all arguments for it are sufficiently answered by railing at rebels and rebellion, and by charging all the present, or future miseries, which we may suffer, on the resistance of our brethren. But I would wish them, in this grave matter, and if peace is not wholly removed from their hearts, to consider seriously, first, that to criminate and recriminate never yet was the road to reconciliation, in any difference amongst men. In the next place, it would be right to reflect, that the American English (whom they may abuse, if they think it honourable to revile the absent) can, as things now stand, neither be provoked at our railing, nor bettered by our instruction. All communication is cut off between us, but this we know with certainty, that, though we cannot reclaim them, we may reform ourselves. If measures of peace are necessary, they

must begin somewhere; and a conciliatory temper must precede and prepare every plan of reconciliation. Nor do I conceive that we suffer anything by thus regulating our own minds. We are not disarmed by being disencumbered of our passions. Declaiming on rebellion never added a bayonet, or a charge of powder, to your military force; but I am afraid that it has been the means of taking up many muskets against you.—*Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.* 1777.

PEACE WITH AMERICA.—I mean to give peace. Peace implies reconciliation; and, where there has been a material dispute, reconciliation does in a manner always imply concession on the one part or the other. In this state of things I make no difficulty in affirming that the proposal ought to originate from us. Great and acknowledged force is not impaired, either in effect or in opinion, by an unwillingness to exert itself. The superior power may offer peace with honour and with safety. Such an offer from such a power will be attributed to magnanimity. But the concessions of the weak are the concessions of fear. When such a one is disarmed, he is wholly at the mercy of his superior; and he loses for ever that time and those chances, which, as they happen to all men, are the strength and resources of all inferior power.—*Speech on Conciliation with America.* 1775.

THE EMBASSY TO AMERICA.—Instead of requiring it from me, as a point of duty, to kindle with your passions, had you all been as cool as I was, you would have been saved from disgraces and distresses that are unutterable. Do you remember our commission? We sent out a solemn embassy across the

Atlantic ocean, to lay the crown, the peerage, the commons of Great Britain, at the feet of the American congress. That our disgrace might want no sort of brightening and burnishing, observe who they were that composed this famous embassy! My Lord Carlisle is among the first ranks of our nobility. He is the identical man who, but two years before, had been put forward, at the opening of a session in the house of lords, as the mover of a haughty and rigorous address against America. He was put in the front of the embassy of submission. Mr. Eden was taken from the office of Lord Suffolk, to whom he was then under secretary of state; from the office of that Lord Suffolk, who but a few weeks before, in his place in parliament, did not deign to inquire where a congress of vagrants was to be found. This Lord Suffolk sent Mr. Eden to find these vagrants, without knowing where this king's generals were to be found, who were joined in the same commission of supplicating those whom they were sent to subdue. They enter the capital of America only to abandon it; and these assertors and representatives of the dignity of England, at the tail of a flying army, let fly their Parthian shafts of memorials and remonstrances at random behind them. Their promises and their offers, their flatteries and their menaces, were all despised; and we were saved from the disgrace of their formal reception, only because the congress scorned to receive them; whilst the state-house of independent Philadelphia opened her doors to the public entry of the ambassador of France. From war and blood we went to submission; and from submission plunged back again to war and blood; to desolate and be desolated, without mea-

sure, hope, or end. I am a Royalist, I blushed for this degradation of the crown. I am a Whig, I blushed for the dishonour of parliament. I am a true Englishman, I felt to the quick for the disgrace of England. I am a man, I felt for the melancholy reverse of human affairs, in the fall of the first power in the world.—*Speech at Bristol previous to the Election.* 1780.

CHAPTER III.

INDIA, AND THE MISGOVERNMENT OF
WARREN HASTINGS.

. . . Reus in iudicium adductus est Caius Verres, homo vita atque factis, omnium jam opinione, damnatus, pecuniæ magnitudine, sua spe ac prædicatione, absolutus. Huic ego causæ, iudices, cum summa voluntate et expectatione populi Romani actor accessi, non ut auferem invidiam ordinis, sed ut infamiæ communi succurrerem. Adduxi enim hominem, in quo reconciliare existimationem iudiciorum amissam, redire in gratiam cum populo Romano, satisfacere exteris nationibus possetis; depeculatorem ærarii, vexatorem Asiæ, atque Pamphyliæ, prædonem juris urbani, labem atque perniciem provinciæ Siciliæ.—CICERO IN VERREM.

INDIA.

BRITISH INDIA IN 1783.—With very few, and those inconsiderable intervals, the British dominion, either in the company's name, or in the names of princes absolutely dependent upon the company, extends from the mountains that separate India from Tartary, to Cape Comorin, that is, one-and-twenty degrees of latitude!

In the northern parts it is a solid mass of land, about eight hundred miles in length, and four or five hundred broad. As you go southward, it becomes narrower for a space. It afterwards dilates; but, narrower or broader, you possess the whole eastern and north-eastern coast of that vast country, quite from the borders of Pegu.—Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, with Benares (now unfortunately in our immediate possession), measure 161,978 square English miles; a territory considerably larger than

the whole kingdom of France. Oude, with its dependent provinces, is 53,286 square miles, not a great deal less than England. The Carnatic, with Tanjore and the Circars, is 65,948 square miles, very considerably larger than England; and the whole of the company's dominions, comprehending Bombay and Salsette, amounts to 281,412 square miles; which forms a territory larger than any European dominion, Russia and Turkey excepted. Through all that vast extent of country there is not a man who eats a mouthful of rice, but by permission of the East India Company.

So far with regard to the extent. The population of this great empire is not easily to be calculated. When the countries, of which it is composed, came into our possession, they were all eminently peopled, and eminently productive; though at that time considerably declined from their ancient prosperity. But, since they are come into our hands! ——! However, if we make the period of our estimate immediately before the utter desolation of the Carnatic, and if we allow for the havoc which our government had even then made in these regions, we cannot, in my opinion, rate the population at much less than thirty millions of souls: more than four times the number of persons in the Island of Great Britain.

My next inquiry to that of the number, is the quality and description of the inhabitants. This multitude of men does not consist of an abject and barbarous populace; much less of gangs of savages, like the Guaranies and Chiquitos, who wander on the waste borders of the river of Amazons, or the Plate; but a people for ages civilised

and cultivated ; cultivated by all the arts of polished life, whilst we were yet in the woods. There, have been (and still the skeletons remain) princes once of great dignity, authority, and opulence. There, are to be found the chiefs of tribes and nations. There, is to be found an ancient and venerable priesthood, the depository of their laws, learning and their history, the guides of the people whilst living, and their consolation in death ; a nobility of great antiquity and renown ; a multitude of cities, not exceeded in population and trade by those of the first class in Europe ; merchants and bankers, individual houses of whom have once vied in capital with the Bank of England ; whose credit had often supported a tottering state, and preserved their governments in the midst of war and desolation ; millions of ingenious manufacturers and mechanics ; millions of the most diligent, and not the least intelligent, tillers of the earth. There, are to be found almost all the religions professed by men, the Braminical, the Mussulman, the Eastern and the Western Christian.

If I were to take the whole aggregate of our possessions there, I should compare it, as the nearest parallel I can find, with the empire of Germany. Our immediate possessions I should compare with the Austrian dominions, and they would not suffer in the comparison. The nabob of Oude might stand for the king of Prussia ; the nabob of Arcot I would compare, as superior in territory, and equal in revenue, to the elector of Saxony. Cheyt Sing, the rajah of Benares, might well rank with the prince of Hesse, at least ; and the rajah of Tanjore (though hardly equal in extent of dominion, superior in

revenue), to the elector of Bavaria. The Polygars and the northern Zemindars, and other great chiefs, might well class with the rest of the princes, dukes, counts, marquisses, and bishops in the empire; all of whom I mention to honour, and surely without disparagement to any or all of those most respectable princes and grandees.

All this vast mass, composed of so many orders and classes of men, is again infinitely diversified by manners, by religion, by hereditary employment, through all their possible combinations. This renders the handling of India a matter in a high degree critical and delicate. But oh! it has been handled rudely indeed. Even some of the reformers seem to have forgot that they had anything to do but to regulate the tenants of a manor, or the shopkeepers of the next county town.

It is an empire of this extent, of this complicated nature, of this dignity and importance, that I have compared to Germany, and the German government! not for an exact resemblance, but as a sort of a middle term, by which India might be approximated to our understandings, and if possible to our feelings; in order to awaken something of sympathy for the unfortunate natives, of which I am afraid we are not perfectly susceptible, whilst we look at this very remote object through a false and cloudy medium.—*Speech on Mr. Fox's East India Bill.* 1783.

CORRUPTION OF THE BRITISH INDIAN GOVERNMENT.—That these oppressions exist, is a fact no more denied, than it is resented as it ought to be. Much evil has been done in India under the British authority. What has been done to redress it? We are no longer surprised at anything. We are above

the unlearned and vulgar passion of admiration. But it will astonish posterity, when they read our opinions in our actions, that after years of inquiry, we have found out that the sole grievance of India consisted in this, that the servants of the company there had not profited enough of their opportunities, nor drained it sufficiently of its treasures; when they shall hear that the very first and only important act of a commission specially named by act of parliament is to charge upon an undone country, in favour of a handful of men in the humblest ranks of the public service, the enormous sum of perhaps four millions of sterling money.

It is difficult for the most wise and upright government to correct the abuses of remote, delegated power, productive of unmeasured wealth, and protected by the boldness and strength of the same ill-got riches. These abuses, full of their own wild native vigour, will grow and flourish under mere neglect. But where the supreme authority, not content with winking at the rapacity of its inferior instruments, is so shameless and corrupt as openly to give bounties and premiums for disobedience to its laws, when it will not trust to the activity of avarice in the pursuit of its own gains, when it secures public robbery by all the careful jealousy and attention with which it ought to protect property from such violence, the commonwealth then is become totally perverted from its purposes; neither God nor man will long endure it; nor will it long endure itself. In that case, there is an unnatural infection, a pestilential taint fermenting in the constitution of society, which fever and convulsions of some kind or other must throw off; or in which the

vital powers, worsted in an unequal struggle, are pushed back upon themselves, and, by a reversal of their whole functions, fester to gangrene, to death ; and, instead of what was but just now the delight and boast of the creation, there will be cast out in the face of the sun, a bloated, putrid, noisome carcass, full of stench and poison, an offence, a horror, a lesson to the world.—*Speech on the Nabob of Arcot's Debts.* 1785.

STATE OF THE GOVERNMENT IN BRITISH INDIA, IN 1783.—The several irruptions of Arabs, Tartars, and Persians, into India were, for the greater part, ferocious, bloody, and wasteful in the extreme ; our entrance into the dominion of that country, was, as generally, with small comparative effusion of blood ; being introduced by various frauds and delusions, and by taking advantage of the incurable, blind, and senseless animosity, which the several country powers bear towards each other, rather than by open force. But the difference in favour of the first conquerors is this ; the Asiatic conquerors very soon abated of their ferocity, because they made the conquered country their own. They rose or fell with the rise or fall of the territory they lived in. Fathers there deposited the hopes of their posterity ; and children there beheld the monuments of their fathers. Here their lot was finally cast ; and it is the natural wish of all, that their lot should not be cast into bad land. Poverty, sterility, and desolation, are not a recreating prospect to the eye of man ; and there are very few who can bear to grow old among the curses of a whole people. If their passion or their avarice drove the Tartar lords to acts of rapacity or tyranny, there was time enough, even in the short life of man, to

bring round the ill effects of an abuse of power upon the power itself. If hoards were made by violence and tyranny, they were still domestic hoards; and domestic profusion, or the rapine of a more powerful and prodigal hand, restored them to the people. With many disorders, and with few political checks upon power, nature had still fair play; the sources of acquisition were not dried up; and therefore the trade, the manufactures, and the commerce of the country flourished. Even avarice and usury itself operated both for the preservation and the employment of national wealth. The husbandman and manufacturer paid heavy interest, but then they augmented the fund from whence they were again to borrow. Their resources were dearly bought, but they were sure; and the general stock of the community grew by the general effort.

But under the English government all this order is reversed. The Tartar invasion was mischievous; but it is our protection that destroys India. It was their enmity, but it is our friendship. Our conquest there, after twenty years, is as crude as it was the first day. The natives scarcely know what it is to see the grey head of an Englishman. Young men (boys almost) govern there, without society, and without sympathy with the native. They have no more social habits with the people, than if they still resided in England; nor, indeed, any species of intercourse but that which is necessary to making a sudden fortune, with a view to a remote settlement. Animated with all the avarice of age, and all the impetuosity of youth, they roll in one after another; wave after wave; and there is nothing before the eyes of the natives but an endless, hopeless prospect

of new flights of birds of prey and passage, with appetites continually renewing for a food that is continually wasting. Every rupee of profit made by an Englishman is lost for ever to India. With us are no retributory superstitions, by which a foundation of charity compensates, through ages, to the poor, for the rapine and injustice of a day. With us no pride erects stately monuments which repair the mischiefs which pride had produced, and which adorn a country out of its own spoils. England has erected no churches, no hospitals, no palaces, no schools; England has built no bridges, made no high roads, cut no navigations, dug out no reservoirs. Every other conqueror of every other description has left some monument, either of state or beneficence, behind him. Were we to be driven out of India this day, nothing would remain to tell that it had been possessed, during the inglorious period of our dominion, by anything better than the ourang-outang or the tiger.

There is nothing in the boys we send to India worse than in the boys whom we are whipping at school, or that we see trailing a pike, or bending over a desk at home. But as English youth in India drink the intoxicating draught of authority and dominion before their heads are able to bear it, and as they are full grown in fortune long before they are ripe in principle, neither nature nor reason have any opportunity to exert themselves for remedy of the excesses of their premature power. The consequences of their conduct, which in good minds (and many of theirs are probably such) might produce penitence or amendment, are unable to pursue the rapidity of their flight. Their prey is lodged in

England; and the cries of India are given to seas and winds, to be blown about, in every breaking up of the monsoon, over a remote and unhearing ocean. In India all the vices operate by which sudden fortune is acquired; in England are often displayed by the same persons, the virtues which dispense hereditary wealth. Arrived in England, the destroyers of the nobility and gentry of a whole kingdom will find the best company in this nation, at a board of elegance and hospitality. Here the manufacturer and husbandman will bless the just and punctual hand that in India has torn the cloth from the loom, or wrested the scanty portion of rice and salt from the peasant of Bengal, or wrung from him the very opium in which he forgot his oppressions and his oppressor. They marry into your families; they enter into your senate; they ease your estates by loans; they raise their value by demand; they cherish and protect your relations which lie heavy on your patronage; and there is scarcely a house in the kingdom that does not feel some concern and interest, that makes all reform of our eastern government appear officious and disgusting; and, on the whole, a most discouraging attempt. In such an attempt you hurt those who are able to return kindness, or to resent injury. If you succeed, you save those who cannot so much as give you thanks. All these things shew the difficulty of the work we have on hand: but they shew its necessity too. Our Indian government is in its best state a grievance. It is necessary that the correctives should be uncommonly vigorous; and the work of men, sanguine, warm, and even impassioned in the cause. But it is an arduous thing to plead against abuses of a power which ori-

ginates from your own country, and affects those whom we are used to consider as strangers.—*Speech on Mr. Fox's East India Bill.* 1783.

THE CARNATIC AND HYDER ALI.—Among the victims to this magnificent plan of universal plunder, worthy of the heroic avarice of the projectors, you have all heard (and he has made himself to be well remembered) of an Indian chief called Hyder Ali Khan. This man possessed the western, as the company under the name of the nabob of Arcot does the eastern, division of the Carnatic. It was among the leading measures in the design of this cabal, (according to their own emphatic language,) to *extirpate* this Hyder Ali. They declared the nabob of Arcot to be his sovereign, and himself to be a rebel, and publicly invested their instrument with the sovereignty of the kingdom of Mysore. But their victim was not of the passive kind. They were soon obliged to conclude a treaty of peace and close alliance with this rebel, at the gates of Madras. Both before and since this treaty, every principle of policy pointed out this power as a natural alliance; and on his part, it was courted by every sort of amicable office. But the cabinet council of English creditors would not suffer their nabob of Arcot to sign the treaty, nor even to give to a prince, at least his equal, the ordinary titles of respect and courtesy.* From that time forward, a continued plot was carried on within the divan, black and white, of the nabob of Arcot, for the destruction of Hyder Ali. As to the outward members of the double, or rather treble, government of Madras, which had signed the treaty, they

* Letters from the presidency at Madras to the court of Directors, 27th June, 1769.

were always prevented by some overruling influence (which they do not describe, but which cannot be misunderstood) from performing what justice and interest combined so evidently to enforce.

When at length Hyder Ali found that he had to do with men who either would sign no convention, or whom no treaty and no signature could bind, and who were the determined enemies of human intercourse itself, he decreed to make the country possessed by these incorrigible and predestinated criminals a memorable example to mankind. He resolved, in the gloomy recesses of a mind capacious of such things, to leave the whole Carnatic an everlasting monument of vengeance, and to put perpetual desolation as a barrier between him and those against whom the faith which holds the moral elements of the world together was no protection. He became at length so confident of his force, so collected in his might, that he made no secret whatsoever of his dreadful resolution. Having terminated his disputes with every enemy, and every rival, who buried their mutual animosities in their common detestation against the creditors of the nabob of Arcot, he drew from every quarter whatever a savage ferocity could add to his new rudiments in the arts of destruction; and compounding all the materials of fury, havoc, and desolation, into one black cloud, he hung for a while on the declivities of the mountains. Whilst the authors of all these evils were idly and stupidly gazing on this menacing meteor, which blackened all their horizon, it suddenly burst, and poured down the whole of its contents upon the plains of the Carnatic.—Then ensued a scene of woe, the like of which no eye had seen, no heart conceived, and

which no tongue can adequately tell. All the horrors of war before known or heard of, were mercy to that new havoc. A storm of universal fire blasted every field, consumed every house, destroyed every temple. The miserable inhabitants flying from their flaming villages, in part were slaughtered; others, without regard to sex, to age, to the respect of rank, or sacredness of function, fathers torn from children, husbands from wives, enveloped in a whirlwind of cavalry, and amidst the goading spears of drivers, and the trampling of pursuing horses, were swept into captivity, in an unknown and hostile land. Those who were able to evade this tempest, fled to the walled cities. But escaping from fire, sword, and exile, they fell into the jaws of famine.

The alms of the settlement, in this dreadful exigency, were certainly liberal: and all was done by charity that private charity could do; but it was a people in beggary; it was a nation which stretched out its hands for food. For months together these creatures of sufferance, whose very excess and luxury in their most plenteous days had fallen short of the allowance of our austere fasts, silent, patient, resigned, without sedition or disturbance, almost without complaint, perished by an hundred a day in the streets of Madras; every day seventy at least laid their bodies in the streets, or on the glacis of Tanjore, and expired of famine in the granary of India. I was going to awake your justice towards this unhappy part of our fellow citizens, by bringing before you some of the circumstances of this plague of hunger. Of all the calamities which beset and waylay the life of man, this comes the nearest to our heart, and is that wherein the proudest of us all feels

himself to be nothing more than he is : but I find myself unable to manage it with decorum ; these details are of a species of horror so nauseous and disgusting ; they are so degrading to the sufferers and to the hearers ; they are so humiliating to human nature itself, that, on better thoughts, I find it more advisable to throw a pall over this hideous object, and to leave it to your general conceptions.

For eighteen months, without intermission, this destruction raged from the gates of Madras to the gates of Tanjore ; and so completely did these masters in their art, Hyder Ali, and his more ferocious son, absolve themselves of their impious vow, that when the British armies traversed, as they did, the Carnatic for hundreds of miles in all directions, through the whole line of their march they did not see one man, not one woman, not one child, not one four-footed beast of any description whatever. One dead, uniform silence reigned over the whole region. With the inconsiderable exceptions of the narrow vicinage of some few forts, I wish to be understood as speaking literally ;—I mean to produce to you more than three witnesses, above all exception, who will support this assertion in its full extent. That hurricane of war passed through every part of the central provinces of the Carnatic. Six or seven districts to the north and to the south (and these not wholly untouched) escaped the general ravage. ,

The Carnatic is a country not much inferior in extent to England. Figure to yourself, Mr. Speaker, the land in whose representative chair you sit ; figure to yourself the form and fashion of your sweet and which country from Thames to Trent, north and

south, and from the Irish to the German sea, east and west, emptied and embowelled (may God avert the omen of our crimes!) by so accomplished a desolation. Extend your imagination a little further, and then suppose your ministers taking a survey of this scene of waste and desolation: what would be your thoughts if you should be informed that they were computing how much had been the amount of the excises, how much the customs, how much the land and malt tax, in order that they should charge (take it in the most favourable light) for public service, upon the relics of the satiated vengeance of relentless enemies, the whole of what England had yielded in the most exuberant seasons of peace and abundance? What would you call it? To call it tyranny sublimed into madness, would be too faint an image; yet this very madness is the principle upon which the ministers at your right hand have proceeded in their estimate of the revenues of the Carnatic, when they were providing, not supply for the establishments of its protection, but, rewards for the authors of its ruin.

Every day you are fatigued and disgusted with this cant, "the Carnatic is a country that will soon recover, and become instantly as prosperous as ever." They think they are talking to innocents, who will believe that, by sowing of dragons' teeth, men may come up ready grown and ready armed. They who will give themselves the trouble of considering (for it requires no great reach of thought, no very profound knowledge) the manner in which mankind are encreased, and countries cultivated, will regard all this raving as it ought to be regarded. In order that the people, after a long period of vexation and

plunder, may be in a condition to maintain government, government must begin by maintaining them. Here the road to economy lies not through receipt, but through expence; and in that country nature has given no short cut to your object. Men must propagate, like other animals, by the mouth. Never did oppression light the nuptial torch; never did extortion and usury spread out the genial bed. Does any one of you think that England, so wasted, would, under such a nursing attendance, so rapidly and cheaply recover? But he is meanly acquainted with either England or India, who does not know that England would a thousand times sooner resume population, fertility, and what ought to be the ultimate secretion from both, revenue, than such a country as the Carnatic.

The Carnatic is not by the bounty of nature a fertile soil. The general size of its cattle is proof enough that it is much otherwise. It is some days since I moved, that a curious and interesting map, kept in the India House, should be laid before you.* The India House is not yet in readiness to send it; I have therefore brought down my own copy, and there it lies for the use of any gentleman who may think such a matter worthy of his attention. It is indeed a noble map, and of noble things; but it is decisive against the golden dreams and sanguine speculations of avarice run mad. In addition to what you know must be the case in every part of the world, (the necessity of a previous provision of habitation, seed, stock, capital,) that map will show you, that the uses of the influences of Heaven itself are in that country a work of art. The Carnatic is

* Mr. Barnard's map of the Jaghire.

refreshed by few or no living brooks or running streams, and it has rain only at a season; but its product of rice exacts the use of water subject to perpetual command. This is the national bank of the Carnatic, on which it must have a perpetual credit, or it perishes irretrievably. For that reason, in the happier times of India, a number, almost incredible, of reservoirs have been made in chosen places throughout the whole country; they are formed for the greater part of mounds of earth and stones, with sluices of solid masonry; the whole constructed with admirable skill and labour, and maintained at a mighty charge. In the territory contained in that map alone, I have been at the trouble of reckoning the reservoirs, and they amount to upwards of eleven hundred, from the extent of two or three acres to five miles in circuit. From these reservoirs, currents are occasionally drawn over the fields, and these watercourses again call for a considerable expense to keep them properly scoured and duly levelled. Taking the district in that map as a measure, there cannot be in the Carnatic and Tanjore fewer than ten thousand of these reservoirs of the larger and middling dimensions, to say nothing of those for domestic services, and the uses of religious purification. These are not the enterprises of your power, nor in a style of magnificence suited to the taste of your minister. These are the monuments of real kings, who were the fathers of their people; testators to a posterity which they embraced as their own. These are the grand sepulchres built by ambition; but by the ambition of an insatiable benevolence, which, not contented with reigning in the dispensation of happiness during the contracted term

of human life, had strained, with all the reachings and graspings of a vivacious mind, to extend the dominion of their bounty beyond the limits of nature, and to perpetuate themselves through generations of generations, the guardians, the protectors, the nourishers of mankind.

Long before the late invasion, the persons who are objects of the grant of public money now before you, had so diverted the supply of the pious funds of culture and population, that everywhere the reservoirs were fallen into a miserable decay. But after those domestic enemies had provoked the entry of a cruel foreign foe into the country, he did not leave it, until his revenge had completed the destruction begun by their avarice. Few, very few indeed, of these magazines of water that are not either totally destroyed, or cut through with such gaps, as to require a serious attention and much cost to re-establish them, as the means of present subsistence to the people, and of future revenue to the state.

What, sir, would a virtuous and enlightened ministry do on the view of the ruins of such works before them? On the view of such a chasm of desolation as that which yawned in the midst of those countries to the north and south, which still bore some vestiges of cultivation? They would have reduced all their most necessary establishments; they would have suspended the justest payments; they would have employed every shilling derived from the producing, to reanimate the powers of the unproductive parts. While they were performing this fundamental duty, whilst they were celebrating these mysteries of justice and humanity, they would have told the corps of fictitious creditors, whose

crimes were their claims, that they must keep an awful distance; that they must silence their inauspicious tongues; that they must hold off their profane, unhallowed paws from this holy work; they would have proclaimed with a voice that should make itself heard, that on every country the first creditor is the plough; that this original, indefeasible claim supersedes every other demand.

This is what a wise and virtuous ministry would have done and said. This, therefore, is what our minister could never think of saying or doing. A ministry of another kind would have first improved the country, and have thus laid a solid foundation for future opulence and future force. But on this grand point of the restoration of the country, there is not one syllable to be found in the correspondence of our ministers, from the first to the last; they felt nothing for a land desolated by fire, sword, and famine; their sympathies took another direction; they were touched with pity for bribery, so long tormented with a fruitless itching of its palms; their bowels yearned for usury, that had long missed the harvest of its returning months;* they felt for peculation, which had been for so many years raking in the dust of an empty treasury; they were melted into compassion for rapine and oppression, licking their dry, parched, unbloody jaws. These were the objects of their solicitude. These were the necessities for which they were studious to provide.—*Speech on the Nabob of Arcot's debts.* 1785.

THE PROPER MODE OF CONDUCTING THE GOVERNMENT IN INDIA.—The British government in India being a subordinate and delegated power, it ought to

* Interest is rated in India by the month.

be considered as a fundamental principle in such a system, that it is to be preserved in the strictest obedience to the government at home. Administration in India, at an immense distance from the seat of the supreme authority; intrusted with the most extensive powers; liable to the greatest temptations; possessing the amplest means of abuse; ruling over a people guarded by no distinct or well-ascertained privileges, whose language, manners, and radical prejudices render not only redress, but all complaint on their part, a matter of extreme difficulty; such an administration, it is evident, never can be made subservient to the interests of Great Britain, or even tolerable to the natives, but by the strictest rigour in exacting obedience to the commands of the authority lawfully set over it.—*Report of a Committee on the Affairs of India.* 1783.

THE DEBT TO THE NABOB OF ARCOT. — But my principal objection lies a good deal deeper. That debt to the company is the pretext under which all the other debts lurk and cover themselves. That debt forms the foul, putrid mucus, in which are engendered the whole brood of creeping ascarides, all the endless involutions, the eternal knot, added to a knot of those inexpugnable tape-worms, which devour the nutriment, and eat up the bowels of India. It is necessary, sir, you should recollect two things: First, that the nabob's debt to the company carries no interest. In the next place you will observe, that whenever the company has occasion to borrow, she has always commanded whatever she thought fit at eight *per cent*. Carrying in your mind these two facts, attend to the process with regard to the public and private debt, and with what little appearance of

decency they play into each other's hands a game of utter perdition to the unhappy natives of India. The nabob falls into an arrear to the company. The presidency presses for payment. The nabob's answer is, I have no money. Good. But there are soucars who will supply you on the mortgage of your territories. Then steps forward some Paul Benfield, and, from his grateful compassion to the nabob, and his filial regard to the company, he unlocks the treasures of his virtuous industry; and, for a consideration of twenty-four or thirty-six *per cent.* on a mortgage of the territorial revenue, becomes security to the company for the nabob's arrear.

All this intermediate usury thus becomes sanctified by the ultimate view to the company's payment.

In consequence of this double game, all the territorial revenues have, at one time or other, been covered by those locusts, the English soucars. Not one single foot of the Carnatic has escaped them; a territory as large as England. During these operations, what a scene has that country presented! The usurious European assignee supersedes the nabob's native farmer of the revenue; the farmer flies to the nabob's presence to claim his bargain; whilst his servants murmur for wages, and his soldiers mutiny for pay. The mortgage to the European assignee is then resumed, and the native farmer replaced; replaced, again to be removed on the new clamour of the European assignee. Every man of rank and landed fortune being long since extinguished, the remaining miserable last cultivator, who grows to the soil, after having his back scored by the farmer, has it again flayed by the whip of the assignee, and is

thus by a ravenous, because a short-lived, succession of claimants, lashed from oppressor to oppressor, whilst a single drop of blood is left as the means of extorting a single grain of corn. Do not think I paint. Far, very far, from it; I do not reach the fact, nor approach to it. Men of respectable condition, men equal to your substantial English yeomen, are daily tied up and scourged to answer the multiplied demands of various contending and contradictory titles, all issuing from one and the same source. Tyrannous exaction brings on servile concealment; and that again calls forth tyrannous coercion. They move in a circle, mutually producing and produced; till at length nothing of humanity is left in the government, no trace of integrity, spirit, or manliness, in the people, who drag out a precarious and degraded existence under this system of outrage upon human nature. Such is the effect of the establishment of a debt to the company, as it has hitherto been managed, and as it ever will remain, until ideas are adopted totally different from those which prevail at this time.—*Speech on the Nabob of Arcot's debts.* 1785.

THE CHARGES AGAINST WARREN HASTINGS.

EXORDIUM OF THE SPEECH AGAINST WARREN HASTINGS.—My lords, strongly impressed as they are with these sentiments, the commons have conducted themselves with singular care and caution. Without losing the spirit and zeal of a public prosecution, they have comported themselves with such moderation, temper, and decorum, as would not have ill become the final judgment, if with them rested the final judgment, of this great cause.

With very few intermissions, the affairs of India have constantly engaged the attention of the commons for more than fourteen years. We may safely affirm, we have tried every mode of legislative provision, before we had recourse to anything of penal process. It was in the year 1774 we framed an act of parliament for remedy to the then existing disorders in India, such as the then information before us enabled us to enact. Finding, that the act of parliament did not answer all the ends, that were expected from it, we had, in the year 1782, recourse to a body of monitory resolutions. Neither had we the expected fruit from them. When, therefore, we found that our inquiries and our reports, our laws and our admonitions, were alike despised; that enormities increased in proportion as they were forbidden, detected, and exposed; when we found that guilt stalked with an erect and upright front, and that legal authority seemed to skulk and hide its head like outlawed guilt; when we found that some of those very persons, who were appointed by parliament to assert the authority of the laws of this kingdom, were the most forward, the most bold, and the most active, in the conspiracy for their destruction; then it was time for the justice of the nation to recollect itself. To have forborne longer would not have been patience, but collusion; it would have been participation with guilt; it would have been to make ourselves accomplices with the criminal.

We found it was impossible to evade painful duty, without betraying a sacred trust. Having, therefore, resolved upon the last and only resource, a penal prosecution, it was our next business to act in a manner worthy of our long deliberation. In all

points we proceeded with selection. We have chosen (we trust it will so appear to your lordships) such a crime, and such a criminal, and such a body of evidence, and such a mode of process, as would have recommended this course of justice to posterity, even if it had not been supported by any example in the practice of our forefathers.

First, to speak of the process : we are to inform your lordships, that, besides that long previous deliberation of fourteen years, we examined, as a preliminary to this proceeding, every circumstance which could prove favourable to parties apparently delinquent, before we finally resolved to prosecute. There was no precedent to be found, in the Journals, favourable to persons in Mr. Hastings's circumstances, that was not applied to. Many measures utterly unknown to former parliamentary proceedings, and which, indeed, seemed in some degree to enfeeble them, but which were all to the advantage of those, that were to be prosecuted, were adopted, for the first time, upon this occasion. In an early stage of the proceeding, the criminal desired to be heard. He was heard ; and he produced before the bar of the house that insolent and unbecoming paper, which lies upon our table. It was deliberately given in by his own hand, and signed with his own name. The commons, however, passed by everything offensive in that paper, with a magnanimity that became them. They considered nothing in it but the facts that the defendant alleged, and the principles he maintained ; and after a deliberation, not short of judicial, we proceeded with confidence to your bar.

So far as to the process ; which, though I mentioned last in the line and order, in which I stated

the objects of our selection, I thought it best to dispatch first.

As to the crime, which we chose, we first considered well what it was in its nature, under all the circumstances which attended it. We weighed it with all its extenuations, and with all its aggravations. On that review we are warranted to assert, that the crimes with which we charge the prisoner at the bar are substantial crimes; that they are no errors or mistakes, such as wise and good men might possibly fall into; which may even produce very pernicious effects, without being in fact great offences. The commons are too liberal, not to allow for the difficulties of a great and arduous public situation. They know too well the domineering necessities, which frequently occur in all great affairs. They know the exigency of a pressing occasion, which, in its precipitate career, bears everything down before it, which does not give time to the mind to recollect its faculties, to reinforce its reason, and to have recourse to fixed principles, but, by compelling an instant and tumultuous decision, too often obliges men to decide in a manner that calm judgment would certainly have rejected. We know, as we are to be served by men, that the persons who serve us must be tried as men, and with a very large allowance indeed to human infirmity and human error. This, my lords, we knew, and we weighed, before we came before you. But the crimes which we charge in these articles, are not lapses, defects, errors, of common human frailty, which, as we know and feel, we can allow for. We charge this offender with no crimes that have not arisen from passions which it is criminal to harbour; with no offences that have

not their root in avarice, rapacity, pride, insolence, ferocity, treachery, cruelty, malignity of temper ; in short, in nothing that does not argue a total extinction of all moral principle ; that does not manifest an inveterate blackness of heart, dyed in grain with malice, vitiated, corrupted, gangrened to the very core. If we do not plant his crimes in those vices, which the breast of man is made to abhor, and the spirit of all laws, human and divine, to interdict, we desire no longer to be heard upon this occasion. Let everything that can be pleaded on the ground of surprise or error, upon those grounds be pleaded with success : we give up the whole of those predicaments. We urge no crimes that were not crimes of forethought. We charge him with nothing that he did not commit upon deliberation ; that he did not commit against advice, supplication, and remonstrance ; that he did not commit against the direct command of lawful authority ; that he did not commit after reproof and reprimand, the reproof and reprimand of those who are authorised by the laws to reprove and reprimand him. The crimes of Mr. Hastings are crimes not only in themselves, but aggravated by being crimes of contumacy. They were crimes not against forms, but against those eternal laws of justice which are our rule and our birthright. His offences are not, in formal, technical language, but in reality, in substance and effect, *high* crimes and high misdemeanours.

So far as to the crimes. As to the criminal, we have chosen him on the same principle, on which we selected the crimes. We have not chosen to bring before you a poor, puny, trembling delinquent, misled, perhaps, by those who ought to have taught him

e better, but who have afterwards oppressed him by their power, as they had first corrupted him by their example. Instances there have been many, wherein the punishment of minor offences, in inferior persons, has been made the means of screening crimes of an high order, and in men of high description. Our course is different. We have not brought before you an obscure offender, who, when his insignificance and weakness are weighed against the power of the prosecution, gives even to public justice something of the appearance of oppression; no, my lords, we have brought before you the first man of India, in rank, authority, and station. We have brought before you the chief of the tribe, the head of the whole body of eastern offenders; a captain-general of iniquity; under whom all the fraud, all the speculation, all the tyranny in India, are embodied, disciplined, arrayed, and paid. This is the person, my lords, that we bring before you. We have brought before you such a person, that, if you strike at him with the firm and decided arm of justice, you will not have need of a great many more examples. You strike at the whole corps, if you strike at the head.

So far as to the crime: so far as to the criminal: Now, my lords, I shall say a few words relative to the evidence, which we have brought to support such a charge, and which ought to be equal in weight to the charge itself. It is chiefly evidence of record, officially signed by the criminal himself in many instances. We have brought before you his own letters, authenticated by his own hand. On these we chiefly rely. But we shall likewise bring before you living witnesses, competent to speak to the points, to which they are brought.

When you consider the late enormous power of the prisoner; when you consider his criminal, indefatigable assiduity in the destruction of all recorded evidence; when you consider the influence he has over almost all living testimony; when you consider the distance of the scene of action; I believe your lordships, and I believe the world, will be astonished, that so much, so clear, so solid, and so conclusive evidence of all kinds has been obtained against him. I have no doubt, that in nine instances in ten, the evidence is such as would satisfy the narrow precision supposed to prevail, and to a degree rightly to prevail, in all subordinate power and delegated jurisdiction. But your lordships will maintain, what we assert and claim as the right of the subjects of Great Britain—that you are not bound by any rules of evidence, or any other rules whatever, except those of natural, immutable, and substantial justice. God forbid the commons should desire, that anything should be received as proof from them, which is not by nature adapted to prove the thing in question. If they should make such a request, they would aim at overturning the very principles of that justice, to which they resort. They would give the nation an evil example, that would rebound back on themselves, and bring destruction upon their own heads, and on those of all their posterity.

On the other hand, I have too much confidence in the learning, with which you will be advised, and the liberality and nobleness of the sentiments, with which you are born, to suspect that you would, by any abuse of the forms, and a technical course of proceeding, deny justice to so great a part of the world, that claims it at your hands. Your lordships always

had an ample power, and almost unlimited jurisdiction; you have now a boundless object. It is not from this district, or from that parish, not from this city, or the other province, that relief is now applied for: exiled and undone princes, extensive tribes, suffering nations, infinite descriptions of men, different in language, in manners, and in rites—men, separated by every barrier of nature from you, by the providence of God are blended in one common cause, and are now become suppliants at your bar. For the honour of this nation, in vindication of this mysterious providence, let it be known, that no rule formed upon municipal maxims (if any such rule exists) will prevent the course of that imperial justice, which you owe to the people, that call to you from all parts of a great disjointed world. For, situated as this kingdom is, an object, thank God, of envy to the rest of nations; its conduct in that high and elevated situation will undoubtedly be scrutinized with a severity as great as its power is invidious.

CRUELTIES OF DEBI SING.—Debi Sing and his instruments suspected, and in a few cases they suspected justly, that the country people had purloined from their own estates, and had hidden in secret places in the circumjacent deserts, some small reserve of their own grain to maintain themselves during the unproductive months of the year, and to leave some hope for a future season. But the under tyrants knew, that the demands of Mr. Hastings would admit no plea for delay, much less for subtraction of his bribe, and that he would not abate a shilling of it to the wants of the whole human race. These hoards, real or supposed, not being discovered by menaces and imprisonment, they fell upon the

last resource, the naked bodies of the people. And here, my lords, began such a scene of cruelties and tortures, as I believe no history has ever presented to the indignation of the world; such as I am sure, in the most barbarous ages, no politic tyranny, no fanatic persecution has ever yet exceeded. Mr. Paterson, the commissioner appointed to inquire into the state of the country, makes his own apology and mine for opening this scene of horrors to you in the following words: "That the punishments, inflicted upon the Ryotts both of Rungpore and Dinagepore for non-payment, were in many instances of such a nature, that I would rather wish to draw a veil over them than shock your feelings by the detail. But that, however disagreeable the task may be to myself, it is absolutely necessary for the sake of justice, humanity, and the honour of government, that they should be exposed, to be prevented in future."

My lords, they began by winding cords round the fingers of the unhappy freeholders of those provinces, until they clung to and were almost incorporated with one another; and then they hammered wedges of iron between them, until, regardless of the cries of the sufferers they had bruised to pieces and for ever crippled those poor, honest, innocent, laborious hands, which had never been raised to their mouths, but with a penurious and scanty proportion of the fruits of their own soil; but those fruits (denied to the wants of their own children) have for more than fifteen years past furnished the investment for our trade with China, and been sent annually out, and without recompense, to purchase for us that delicate meal, with which your lordships, and all this auditory, and all this country, have begun

every day for these fifteen years, at their expense. To those beneficent hands, that labour for our benefit, the return of the British government has been cords, and hammers, and wedges. But there is a place where these crippled and disabled hands will act with resistless power. What is it, that they will not pull down, when they are lifted to heaven against their oppressors? Then what can withstand such hands? Can the power, that crushed and destroyed them? Powerful in prayer, let us at least deprecate, and thus endeavour to secure ourselves from, the vengeance which these mashed and disabled hands may pull down upon us. My lords, it is an awful consideration. Let us think of it.

But to pursue this melancholy but necessary detail. I am next to open to your lordships, what I am hereafter to prove, that the most substantial and leading yeomen, the responsible farmers, the parochial magistrates, and chiefs of villages, were tied two and two by the legs together; and their tormentors, throwing them with their heads downwards over a bar, beat them on the soles of the feet with ratans, until the nails fell from the toes; and then attacking them at their heads, as they hung downward, as before at their feet, they beat them with sticks and other instruments of blind fury, until the blood gushed out at their eyes, mouths, and noses.

Not thinking that the ordinary whips and cudgels, even so administered, were sufficient, to others (and often also to the same, who had suffered as I have stated) they applied, instead of ratan and bamboo, whips made of the branches of the Bale-tree; a tree full of sharp and strong thorns, which tear the skin and lacerate the flesh far worse than ordinary scourges.

For others, exploring with a searching and inquisitive malice, stimulated by an insatiate rapacity, all the devious paths of nature for whatever is most unfriendly to man, they made rods of a plant highly caustic and poisonous, called *Bechettea*, every wound of which festers and gangrenes, adds double and treble to the present torture, leaves a crust of leprous sores upon the body, and often ends in the destruction of life itself.

At night, these poor innocent sufferers, these martyrs of avarice and extortion, were brought into dungeons; and in the season when nature takes refuge in insensibility from all the miseries and cares, which wait on life, they were three times scourged, and made to reckon the watches of the night by periods and intervals of torment. They were then led out in the severe depth of winter, which there at certain seasons would be severe to any, to the Indians is most severe and almost intolerable,—they were led out before break of day, and, stiff and sore as they were with the bruises and wounds of the night, were plunged into water; and whilst their jaws clung together with the cold, and their bodies were rendered infinitely more sensible, the blows and stripes were renewed upon their backs; and then, delivering them over to soldiers, they were sent into their farms and villages to discover where a few handfuls of grain might be found concealed, or to extract some loan from the remnants of compassion and courage not subdued in those, who had reason to fear, that their own turn of torment would be next, that they should succeed them in the same punishment, and that their very humanity, being taken as a proof of their wealth, would subject them (as it did in many cases subject

them) to the same inhuman tortures. After this circuit of the day through their plundered and ruined villages, they were remanded at night to the same prison; whipped, as before, at their return to the dungeon; and at morning whipped at their leaving it; and then sent as before to purchase, by begging in the day, the reiteration of the torture in the night. Days of menace, insult and extortion;—nights of bolts, fetters, and flagellation succeeded to each other in the same round, and for a long time made up all the vicissitude of life to these miserable people.

But there are persons whose fortitude could bear their own suffering; there are men who are hardened by their very pains; and the mind, strengthened even by the torments of the body, rises with a strong defiance against its oppressor. They were assaulted on the side of their sympathy. Children were scourged almost to death in the presence of their parents. This was not enough. The son and father were bound close together, face to face, and body to body, and in that situation cruelly lashed together, so that the blow which escaped the father fell upon the son, and the blow which missed the son wound over the back of the parent. The circumstances were combined by so subtle a cruelty, that every stroke which did not excruciate the sense, should wound and lacerate the sentiments and affections of nature.

On the same principle, and for the same ends, virgins, who had never seen the sun, were dragged from the inmost sanctuaries of their houses. Wives were torn from the arms of their husbands, and suffered the same flagitious wrongs, which were indeed hid in the bottoms of the dungeons, in which

their honour and their liberty were buried together.

The women thus treated lost their cast. My lords, we are not here to commend or blame the institutions and prejudices of a whole race of people, radiated in them by a long succession of ages, on which no reason or argument, on which no vicissitudes of things, no mixtures of men, or foreign conquest, have been able to make the smallest impression. The aboriginal Gentû inhabitants are all dispersed into tribes or casts; each cast born to an invariable rank, rights, and descriptions of employment; so that one cast cannot by any means pass into another. With the Gentûs certain impurities or disgraces, though without any guilt of the party, infer loss of cast; and when the highest cast, that of the Brahmin, which is not only noble but sacred, is lost, the person who loses it does not slide down into one lower but reputable—he is wholly driven from all honest society. All the relations of life are at once dissolved. His parents are no longer his parents; his wife is no longer his wife; his children, no longer his, are no longer to regard him as their father. It is something far worse than complete outlawry, complete attainder, and universal excommunication. It is a pollution even to touch him; and if he touches any of his old cast, they are justified in putting him to death. Contagion, leprosy, plague, are not so much shunned. No honest occupation can be followed. He becomes an *Halichore*, if (which is rare) he survives that miserable degradation.

Your lordships will not wonder that these monstrous and oppressive demands, exacted with such tortures, threw the whole province into despair.

They abandoned their crops on the ground. The people, in a body, would have fled out of its confines ; but bands of soldiers invested the avenues of the province, and, making a line of circumvallation, drove back those wretches, who sought exile as a relief, into the prison of their native soil. Not suffered to quit the district, they fled to the many wild thickets, which oppression had scattered through it, and sought amongst the jungles and dens of tigers a refuge from the tyranny of Warren Hastings. Not able long to exist here, pressed at once by wild beasts and famine, the same despair drove them back ; and seeking their last resource in arms, the most quiet, the most passive, the most timid of the human race, rose up in an universal insurrection ; and, what will always happen in popular tumults, the effects of the fury of the people fell on the meaner and sometimes the reluctant instruments of the tyranny, who in several places were massacred. The insurrection began in Rungpore, and soon spread its fire to the neighbouring provinces, which had been harassed by the same person with the same oppressions. The English chief in that province had been the silent witness, most probably the abettor and accomplice of all these horrors. He called in first irregular, and then regular troops, who by dreadful and universal military execution got the better of the impotent resistance of unarmed and undisciplined despair. I am tired with the detail of the cruelties of peace. I spare you those of a cruel and inhuman war, and of the executions, which, without law or process, or even the shadow of authority, were ordered by the English revenue chief in that province.—*Speech in the Impeachment of Warren Hastings.*

NECESSITY OF ENFORCING THE LAW WITH REGARD TO THE MISGOVERNMENT IN INDIA.—Our design, my lords, is not merely to disprove the prisoner's defence, but to vindicate the rights and privileges of the people of India. We wish to reinstate them in your sympathy. We wish you to respect a people as respectable as yourselves; a people who know as well as you what is rank, what is law, what is property; a people who know how to feel disgrace, who know what equity, what reason, what proportion in punishments, what security of property is, just as well as any of your lordships; for these are things which are secured to them by laws, by religion, by declarations of all their sovereigns. And what, my lords, is opposed to all this? The practice of tyrants and usurpers, which Mr. Hastings takes for his rule and guidance. He endeavours to find deviations from legal government, and then instructs his counsel to say that I have asserted there is no such thing as arbitrary power in the East. But, my lords, we all know that there has been arbitrary power in India; that tyrants have usurped it; and that in some instances princes, otherwise meritorious, have violated the liberties of the people, and have been lawfully deposed for such violation. I do not deny that there are robberies on Hounslow-Heath; that there are such things as forgeries, burglaries, and murders; but I say that these acts are against law, and that, whoever commit them commit illegal acts. When a man is to defend himself against a charge of crime, it is not instances of similar violation of law that is to be the standard of his defence. A man may as well say, "I robbed upon Hounslow-Heath, but hundreds robbed there before me:" to which I an-

swer, "The law has forbidden you to rob there, and I will hang you for having violated the law, notwithstanding the long list of similar violations, which you have produced as precedents." No doubt, princes have violated the laws of this country; they have suffered for it. Nobles have violated the law; their privileges have not protected them from punishment. Common people have violated the law; they have been hanged for it. I know no human being exempt from the law. The law is the security of the people of England, it is the security of the people of India, it is the security of every person that is governed, and of every person that governs. There is but one law for all, namely, that law which governs all law, the law of our Creator, the law of Humanity, Justice, Equity—the law of Nature and of Nations. So far as any laws fortify this primeval law, and give it more precision, more energy, more effect by their declarations, such laws enter into the sanctuary, and participate in the sacredness of its character. But the man who quotes as precedents the abuses of tyrants and robbers, pollutes the very fountain of Justice, destroys the foundations of all law, and thereby removes the only safeguard against evil men, whether governing or governed—the guard which prevents governors from becoming tyrants, and the governed from becoming rebels.—*Speech in the Impeachment of Warren Hastings.*

THE PERORATION OF THE SPEECH AGAINST WARREN HASTINGS.—In the name of the commons of England, I charge all this villany upon Warren Hastings, in this last moment of my application to you.

My lords, what is it, that we want here to a great

act of national justice? Do we want a cause, my lords? You have the cause of oppressed princes, of undone women of the first rank, of desolated provinces, and of wasted kingdoms.

Do you want a criminal, my lords? When was there so much iniquity ever laid to the charge of any one?—No, my lords, you must not look to punish any other such delinquent from India. Warren Hastings has not left substance enough in India to nourish such another delinquent.

My lords, is it a prosecutor you want?—You have before you the commons of Great Britain as prosecutors; and, I believe, my lords, that the sun, in his beneficent progress round the world, does not behold a more glorious sight than that of men, separated from a remote people by the material bounds and barriers of nature, united by the bond of a social and moral community;—all the commons of England resenting, as their own, the indignities and cruelties, that are offered to all the people of India.

Do we want a tribunal? My lords, no example of antiquity, nothing in the modern world, nothing in the range of human imagination, can supply us with a tribunal like this. My lords, here we see virtually in the mind's eye that sacred majesty of the crown, under whose authority you sit, and whose power you exercise. We see in that invisible authority, what we all feel in reality and life, the beneficent powers and protecting justice of His Majesty. We have here the heir apparent to the crown, such as the fond wishes of the people of England wish an heir apparent to the crown to be. We have here all the branches of the royal family in a situation between majesty and subjection, between the sovereign and the subject,—

offering a pledge in that situation for the support of the rights of the crown, and the liberties of the people, both which extremities they touch. My lords, we have a great hereditary peerage here; those who have their own honour, the honour of their ancestors, and of their posterity, to guard; and who will justify, as they have always justified, that provision in the constitution, by which justice is made an hereditary office. My lords, we have here a new nobility, who have risen, and exalted themselves by various merits, by great military services, which have extended the fame of this country from the rising to the setting sun: we have those, who by various civil merits and various civil talents have been exalted to a situation, which they well deserve, and in which they will justify the favour of their sovereign, and the good opinion of their fellow-subjects; and make them rejoice to see those virtuous characters, that were the other day upon a level with them, now exalted above them in rank, but feeling with them in sympathy what they felt in common with them before. We have persons exalted from the practice of the law, from the place, in which they administered high, though subordinate justice, to a seat here, to enlighten with their knowledge, and to strengthen with their votes those principles, which have distinguished the courts, in which they have presided.

My lords, you have here also the lights of our religion; you have the Bishops of England. My lords, you have that true image of the primitive Church in its ancient form; in its ancient ordinances, purified from the superstitions and the vices, which a

long succession of ages will bring upon the best institutions. You have the representatives of that religion, which says, that their God is love, that the very vital spirit of their institution is charity; a religion, which so much hates oppression, that, when the God, whom we adore, appeared in human form, he did not appear in a form of greatness and majesty, but in sympathy with the lowest of the people,—and thereby made it a firm and ruling principle, that their welfare was the object of all government; since the person, who was the master of nature, chose to appear himself in a subordinate situation. These are the considerations, which influence them, which animate them, and will animate them, against all oppression; knowing, that He, who is called first among them, and first among us all, both of the flock that is fed, and of those who feed it, made Himself the servant of all.”

My lords, these are the securities, which we have in all the constituent parts of the body of this house. We know them, we reckon, we rest upon them, and commit safely the interests of India and of humanity into your hands. Therefore, it is with confidence, that, ordered by the commons,

I impeach Warren Hastings, Esq., of high crimes and misdemeanors.

I impeach him in the name of the commons of Great Britain in Parliament assembled, whose parliamentary trust he has betrayed.

I impeach him in the name of all the commons of Great Britain, whose national character he has dishonoured.

I impeach him in the name of the people of India,

whose laws, rights, and liberties he has subverted; whose properties he has destroyed, whose country he has laid waste and desolate.

I impeach him in the name, and by virtue, of those eternal laws of justice, which he has violated.

I impeach him in the name of human nature itself, which he has cruelly outraged, injured, and oppressed in both sexes, in every age, rank, situation, and condition of life.

CHAPTER IV.

FRANCE AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

—◆—

So spake the fervent angel, but his zeal
 None seconded, as out of season judged,
 Or singular and rash.
 Unmoved,
 Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified ;
 His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal ;
 Nor number nor example with him wrought,
 To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
 Though single. From amidst them forth he passed
 Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustained
 Superior, nor of violence fear'd aught ;
 And with retorted scorn his back he turned
 On those proud towers to swift destruction doomed.

MILTON.

FRANCE.

CONDITION OF FRANCE IN 1789.—Indeed, when I consider the face of the kingdom of France ; the multitude and opulence of her cities ; the useful magnificence of her spacious high roads and bridges ; the opportunity of her artificial canals and navigations opening the conveniences of maritime communication through a solid continent of so immense an extent ; when I turn my eyes to the stupendous works of her ports and harbours, and to her whole naval apparatus, whether for war or trade : when I bring before my view the number of her fortifications, constructed with so bold and masterly a skill, and made and maintained at so prodigious a charge, presenting an armed front and impenetrable barrier

to her enemies upon every side: when I recollect how very small a part of that extensive region is without cultivation, and to what complete perfection the culture of many of the best productions of the earth have been brought in France; when I reflect on the excellence of her manufactures and fabrics, second to none but ours, and in some particulars not second; when I contemplate the grand foundations of charity, public and private; when I survey the state of all the arts that beautify and polish life; when I reckon the men she has bred for extending her fame in war, her able statesmen, the multitude of her profound lawyers and theologians, her philosophers, her critics, her historians and antiquaries, her poets and her orators, sacred and profane; I behold in all this something which awes and commands the imagination, which checks the mind on the brink of precipitate and indiscriminate censure, and which demands that we should very seriously examine, what and how great are the latent vices that could authorize us at once to level so specious a fabric with the ground. I do not recognise, in this view of things, the despotism of Turkey. Nor do I discern the character of a government that has been, on the whole, so oppressive, or so corrupt, or so negligent, as to be utterly unfit *for all reformation*. I must think such a government well deserved to have its excellencies heightened, its faults corrected, and its capacities improved into a British constitution.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France*. 1790.

THE CLERGY OF FRANCE IN 1760.—When my occasions took me into France, towards the close of the late reign, the clergy, under all their forms, engaged a considerable part of my curiosity. So far from

finding (except from one set of men, not then very numerous, though very active) the complaints and discontents against that body, which some publications had given me reason to expect, I perceived little or no public or private uneasiness on their account. On further examination, I found the clergy, in general, persons of moderate minds and decorous manners; I include the seculars, and the regulars of both sexes. I had not the good fortune to know a great many of the parochial clergy: but in general I received a perfectly good account of their morals, and of their attention to their duties. With some of the higher clergy I had a personal acquaintance; and of the rest in that class, a very good means of information. They were, almost all of them, persons of noble birth. They resembled others of their own rank; and where there was any difference, it was in their favour. They were more fully educated than the military noblesse; so as by no means to disgrace their profession by ignorance, or by want of fitness for the exercise of their authority. They seemed to me, beyond the clerical character, liberal and open; with the hearts of gentlemen, and men of honour; neither insolent nor servile in their manners and conduct. They seemed to me rather a superior class; a set of men, amongst whom you would not be surprised to find a *Fénelon*. I saw among the clergy in Paris (many of the description are not to be met with anywhere) men of great learning and candour; and I had reason to believe that this description was not confined to Paris. What I found in other places I know was accidental, and therefore to be presumed a fair sample. I spent a few days in a provincial town, where, in the absence of the bishop, I passed my

evenings with three clergymen, his vicars-general, persons who would have done honour to any church. They were all well informed; two of them of deep, general, and extensive erudition, ancient and modern, oriental and western; particularly in their own profession. They had a more extensive knowledge of our English divines than I expected; and they entered into the genius of those writers with a critical accuracy. One of these gentlemen is since dead, the Abbé *Morangis*. I pay this tribute, without reluctance, to the memory of that noble, reverend, learned, and excellent person; and I should do the same, with equal cheerfulness, to the merits of the others, who I believe are still living, if I did not fear to hurt those whom I am unable to serve.

Some of these ecclesiastics, of rank, are, by all titles, persons deserving of general respect. They are deserving of gratitude from me, and from many English. If this letter should ever come into their hands, I hope they will believe there are those of our nation who feel for their unmerited fall, and for the cruel confiscation of their fortunes, with no common sensibility. What I say of them is a testimony, as far as one feeble voice can go, which I owe to truth.
—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

PICTURE OF REVOLUTIONARY FRANCE.—France has not sacrificed her virtue to her interest; but she has abandoned her interest, that she might prostitute her virtue. All other nations have begun the fabrick of a new government, or the reformation of an old, by

establishing originally, or by enforcing with greater exactness, some rites or other of religion. All other people have laid the foundations of civil freedom in severer manners, and a system of a more austere and masculine morality. France, when she let loose the reins of regal authority, doubled the licence of a ferocious dissoluteness in manners, and of an insolent irreligion in opinions and practices; and has extended through all ranks of life, as if she were communicating some privilege, or laying open some secluded benefit, all the unhappy corruptions that usually were the disease of wealth and power. This is one of the new principles of equality in France.

France, by the perfidy of her leaders, has utterly disgraced the tone of lenient council in the cabinets of princes, and disarmed it of its most potent topics. She has sanctified the dark, suspicious maxims of tyrannous distrust; and taught kings to tremble at (what will hereafter be called) the delusive plausibilities of moral politicians. Sovereigns will consider those who advise them to place an unlimited confidence in their people, as subverters of their thrones; as traitors who aim at their destruction, by leading their easy goodnature, under specious pretences, to admit combinations of bold and faithless men into a participation of their power. This alone (if there were nothing else) is an irreparable calamity to you and to mankind. Remember that your parliament of Paris told your king, that, in calling the states together, he had nothing to fear but the prodigal excess of their zeal in providing for the support of the throne. It is right that these men should hide their heads. It is right that they should bear their part in the ruin which their counsel has brought on

their sovereign and their country. Such sanguine declarations tend to lull authority asleep; to encourage it rashly to engage in perilous adventures of untried policy; to neglect those provisions, preparations, and precautions, which distinguish benevolence from imbecility; and without which no man can answer for the salutary effect of any abstract plan of government or of freedom. For want of these, they have seen the medicine of the state corrupted into its poison. They have seen the French rebel against a mild and lawful monarch, with more fury, outrage, and insult, than ever any people has been known to rise against the most illegal usurper, or the most sanguinary tyrant. Their resistance was made to concession; their revolt was from protection; their blow was aimed at a hand holding out graces, favours, and immunities.

This was unnatural. The rest is in order. They have found their punishment in their success. Laws overturned; tribunals subverted; industry without vigour; commerce expiring; the revenue unpaid, yet the people impoverished; a church pillaged, and a state not relieved; civil and military anarchy made the constitution of the kingdom; everything, human and divine, sacrificed to the idol of public credit, and national bankruptcy the consequence; and, to crown all, the paper securities of new, precarious, tottering power, the discredited paper securities of impoverished fraud, and beggared rapine, held out as a currency for the support of an empire, in lieu of the two great recognised species that represent the lasting conventional credit of mankind, which disappeared and hid themselves in the earth from whence they came,

when the principle of property, whose creatures and representatives they are, was systematically subverted.

Were all these dreadful things necessary? Were they the inevitable results of the desperate struggle of determined patriots, compelled to wade, through blood and tumult, to the quiet shore of a tranquil and prosperous liberty? No! nothing like it. The fresh ruins of France, which shock our feelings wherever we can turn our eyes, are not the devastation of civil war; they are the sad but instructive monuments of rash and ignorant counsel in time of profound peace. They are the display of inconsiderate and presumptuous, because unresisted and irresistible, authority. The persons who have thus squandered away the precious treasure of their crimes, the persons who have made this prodigal and wild waste of public evils, (the last stake reserved for the ultimate ransom of the state,) have met in their progress with little, or rather with no opposition at all. Their whole march was more like a triumphal procession than the progress of a war. Their pioneers have gone before them, and demolished and laid everything level at their feet. Not one drop of *their* blood have they shed in the cause of the country they have ruined. They have made no sacrifices to their projects of greater consequence than their shoe-buckles, whilst they were imprisoning their king, murdering their fellow-citizens, and bathing in tears, and plunging in poverty and distress, thousands of worthy men and worthy families. Their cruelty has not even been the base result of fear. It has been the effect of their sense of perfect safety, in authorizing treasons, robberies, rapes, assassinations, slaughters,

and burnings, throughout their harassed land.—
Reflections on the Revolution in France.

ERROR IN COMPARING THE FRENCH REVOLUTION WITH THAT OF ENGLAND IN 1688.—He felt some concern that this strange thing, called a Revolution in France, should be compared with the glorious event commonly called the Revolution in England; and the conduct of the soldiery, on that occasion, compared with the behaviour of some of the troops of France in the present instance. At that period the Prince of Orange, a prince of the blood-royal in England, was called in by the flower of the English aristocracy to defend its ancient constitution, and not to level all distinctions. To this prince, so invited, the democratic leaders who commanded the troops went over with their several corps, in bodies, to the deliverer of their country. Aristocratic leaders brought up the corps of citizens who newly enlisted in this cause. Military obedience changed its object; but military discipline was not for a moment interrupted in its principle. The troops were ready for war, but indisposed to mutiny.

But as the conduct of the English armies was different, so was that of the whole English nation at that time. In truth, the circumstances of our revolution (as it is called) and that of France are just the reverse of each other in almost every particular, and in the whole spirit of the transaction. With us it was the case of a legal monarch attempting arbitrary power—in France it is the case of an arbitrary monarch beginning, from whatever cause, to legalize his authority. The one was to be resisted, the other was to be managed and directed; but in neither case was the order of the state to be changed, lest government

might be ruined, which ought only to be corrected and legalized. With us we got rid of the man, and preserved the constituent parts of the state. There they get rid of the constituent parts of the state, and keep the man. What we did was in truth and substance, and in a constitutional light, a revolution, not made, but prevented. We took solid securities; we settled doubtful questions; we corrected anomalies in our law. In the stable, fundamental parts of our constitution, we made no revolution; no, nor any alteration at all. We did not impair the monarchy. Perhaps it might be shown that we strengthened it very considerably. The nation kept the same ranks, the same orders, the same privileges, the same franchises, the same rules for property, the same subordinations, the same order in the law, in the revenue, and in the magistracy; the same lords, the same commons, the same corporations, the same electors.

The church was not impaired. Her estates, her majesty, her splendour, her orders and gradations, continued the same. She was preserved in her full efficiency, and cleared only of a certain intolerance, which was her weakness and disgrace. The church and the state were the same after the Revolution that they were before, but better secured in every part.

Was little done because a revolution was not made in the constitution? No! Everything was done; because we commenced with reparation, not with ruin. Accordingly the state flourished. Instead of lying as dead, in a sort of trance, or exposed, as some others, in an epileptic fit, to the pity or derision of the world, for her wild, ridiculous, convulsive movements, impotent to every purpose but that of

dashing out her brains against the pavement, Great Britain rose above the standard even of her former self. An era of a more improved domestic prosperity then commenced, and still continues not only unimpaired, but growing, under the wasting hand of time. All the energies of the country were awakened. England never preserved a firmer countenance, nor a more vigorous arm, to all her enemies, and to all her rivals. Europe under her respired and revived. Everywhere she appeared as the protector, assessor, or avenger of liberty. A war was made and supported against fortune itself. The treaty of Ryswick, which first limited the power of France, was soon after made: the grand alliance very shortly followed, which shook to the foundations the dreadful power which menaced the independence of mankind. The states of Europe lay happy under the shade of a great and free monarchy, which knew how to be great without endangering its own peace at home, or the internal or external peace of any of its neighbours.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

QUALIFICATIONS FOR POLITICAL POWER.—I do not, my dear Sir, conceive you to be of that sophistical, captious spirit, or of that uncandid dulness, as to require, for every general observation or sentiment, an explicit detail of the correctives and exceptions, which reason will presume to be included in all the general propositions which come from reasonable men. You do not imagine, that I wish to confine power, authority, and distinction to blood, and names, and titles. No, Sir. There is no qualification for government but virtue and wisdom, actual or presumptive. Wherever they are actually found, they have, in whatever state, condition, profession, or

trade, the passport of Heaven to human place and honour. Woe to the country which would madly and impiously reject the service of the talents and virtues, civil, military, or religious, that are given to grace and to serve it; and would condemn to obscurity everything formed to diffuse lustre and glory around a state. Woe to that country too, that, passing into the opposite extreme, considers a low education, a mean contracted view of things, a sordid, mercenary occupation, as a preferable title to command. Everything ought to be open; but not indifferently to every man. No rotation; no appointment by lot; no mode of election operating in the spirit of sortition, or rotation, can be generally good in a government conversant in extensive objects. Because they have no tendency, direct or indirect, to select the man with a view to the duty, or to accommodate the one to the other. I do not hesitate to say, that the road to eminence and power, from obscure condition, ought not to be made too easy, nor a thing too much of course. If rare merit be the rarest of all rare things, it ought to pass through some sort of probation. The temple of honour ought to be seated on an eminence. If it be opened through virtue, let it be remembered too, that virtue is never tried but by some difficulty and some struggle.

Nothing is a due and adequate representation of a state, that does not represent its ability, as well as its property. But as ability is a vigorous and active principle, and as property is sluggish, inert, and timid, it never can be safe from the invasions of ability, unless it be, out of all proportion, predominant in the representation. It must be represented too in great masses of accumulation, or it is not

rightly protected. The characteristic essence of property, formed out of the combined principles of its acquisition and conservation, is to be *unequal*. The great masses therefore which excite envy, and tempt rapacity, must be put out of the possibility of danger. Then they form a natural rampart about the lesser properties in all their gradations. The same quantity of property, which is by the natural course of things divided among many, has not the same operation. Its defensive power is weakened as it is diffused. In this diffusion each man's portion is less than what, in the eagerness of his desires, he may flatter himself to obtain by dissipating the accumulations of others. The plunder of the few would indeed give but a share inconceivably small in the distribution to the many. But the many are not capable of making this calculation; and those who lead them to rapine never intend this distribution.

It is said that twenty-four millions ought to prevail over two hundred thousand. True; if the constitution of a kingdom be a problem of arithmetic. This sort of discourse does well enough with the lamp-post for its second: to men who *may* reason calmly, it is ridiculous. The will of the many, and their interest, must very often differ; and great will be the difference when they make an evil choice.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

CAUSES OF EUROPEAN MANNERS AND CIVILISATION.—We are but too apt to consider things in the state in which we find them, without sufficiently adverting to the causes by which they have been produced, and possibly may be upheld. Nothing is more certain than that our manners, our civilisation, and all the good things which are connected with

manners and with civilisation, have in this European world of ours depended for ages upon two principles, and were indeed the result of both combined; I mean the spirit of a gentleman, and the spirit of religion. The nobility and the clergy, the one by profession, the other by patronage, kept learning in existence, even in the midst of arms and confusions, and whilst governments were rather in their causes than formed. Learning paid back what it received to nobility and to priesthood: and paid it with usury, by enlarging their ideas, and by furnishing their minds. Happy if they had all continued to know their indissoluble union, and their proper place! Happy if learning, not debauched by ambition, had been satisfied to continue the instructor, and not aspired to be the master! Along with its natural protectors and guardians, learning will be cast into the mire, and trodden down under the hoofs of a swinish multitude.

If, as I suspect, modern letters owe more than they are always willing to owe to ancient manners, so do other interests which we value full as much as they are worth. Even commerce, and trade, and manufacture, the gods of our economical politicians, are themselves perhaps but creatures; are themselves but effects, which, as first causes, we choose to worship. They certainly grew under the same shade in which learning flourished. They too may decay with their natural protecting principles. With you, for the present at least, they all threaten to disappear together. Where trade and manufactures are wanting to a people, and the spirit of nobility and religion remains, sentiment supplies, and not always ill-supplies, their place; but if commerce and the arts

should be lost in an experiment to try how well a state may stand without these old fundamental principles, what sort of a thing must be a nation of gross, stupid, ferocious, and, at the same time, poor and sordid, barbarians, destitute of religion, honour, or manly pride, possessing nothing at present, and hoping for nothing hereafter?—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

THE REVOLUTIONARY EVENTS IN PARIS ON THE 6TH OCTOBER, 1789, AND THE SUFFERINGS OF THE KING AND QUEEN OF FRANCE.—The kind of anniversary sermons to which a great part of what I write refers, if men are not shamed out of their present course, in commemorating the fact, will cheat many out of the principles, and deprive them of the benefits, of the revolution they commemorate. I confess to you, sir, I never liked this continual talk of resistance, and revolution, or the practice of making the extreme medicine of the constitution its daily bread. It renders the habit of society dangerously valetudinary: it is taking periodically doses of mercury sublimate, and swallowing down repeated provocatives of cantharides to our love of liberty.

This distemper of remedy, grown habitual, relaxes and wears out, by a vulgar and prostituted use, the spring of that spirit which is to be exerted on great occasions. It was in the most patient period of Roman servitude that themes of tyrannicide made the ordinary exercise of boys at school—*cum perimit sævos classis numerosa tyrannos.* In the ordinary state of things, it produces in a country like ours the worst effects, even on the cause of that liberty which it abuses with the dissoluteness of an extravagant speculation. Almost all the high-bred republicans

of my time have, after a short space, become the most decided, thorough-paced courtiers; they soon left the business of a tedious, moderate, but practical resistance, to those of us whom, in the pride and intoxication of their theories, they have slighted as not much better than tories. Hypocrisy, of course, delights in the most sublime speculations; for, never intending to go beyond speculation, it costs nothing to have it magnificent. But even in cases where rather levity than fraud was to be suspected in these ranting speculations, the issue has been much the same. These professors, finding their extreme principles not applicable to cases which call only for a qualified, or, as I may say, civil, and legal resistance, in such cases employ no resistance at all. It is with them a war or a revolution, or it is nothing. Finding their schemes of politics not adapted to the state of the world in which they live, they often come to think lightly of all public principle; and are ready, on their part, to abandon for a very trivial interest what they find of very trivial value. Some indeed are of more steady and persevering natures; but these are eager politicians out of parliament, who have little to tempt them to abandon their favourite projects. They have some change in the church or state, or both, constantly in their view. When that is the case, they are always bad citizens, and perfectly unsure connexions. For, considering their speculative designs as of infinite value, and the actual arrangement of the state as of no estimation, they are at best indifferent about it. They see no merit in the good, and no fault in the vicious, management of public affairs; they rather rejoice in the latter, as more propitious to revolution. They see no merit

or demerit in any man, or any action, or any political principle, any further than as they may forward or retard their design of change: they therefore take up, one day, the most violent and stretched prerogative, and another time the wildest democratic ideas of freedom, and pass from the one to the other without any sort of regard to cause, to person, or to party.

I find a preacher of the gospel profaning the beautiful and prophetic ejaculation, commonly called "*nunc dimittis*," made on the first presentation of our Saviour in the temple, and applying it, with an inhuman and unnatural rapture, to the most horrid, atrocious, and afflicting spectacle that perhaps ever was exhibited to the pity and indignation of mankind. This "*leading in triumph*," a thing in its best form unmanly and irreligious, which fills our preacher with such unhallowed transports, must shock, I believe, the moral taste of every well-born mind. Several English were the stupefied and indignant spectators of that triumph. It was (unless we have been strangely deceived) a spectacle more resembling a procession of American Savages, entering into Onondago, after some of their murders called victories, and leading into hovels hung round with scalps, their captives, overpowered with the scoffs and buffets of women as ferocious as themselves, much more than it resembled the triumphal pomp of a civilised, martial nation;—if a civilised nation, or any men who had a sense of generosity, were capable of a personal triumph over the fallen and afflicted.

This, my dear sir, was not the triumph of France. I must believe that, as a nation, it overwhelmed you with shame and horror.

History, who keeps a durable record of all our acts, and exercises her awful censure over the proceedings of all sorts of sovereigns, will not forget either those events, or the era of this liberal refinement in the intercourse of mankind. History will record, that on the morning of the 6th of October, 1789, the king and queen of France, after a day of confusion, alarm, dismay, and slaughter, lay down, under the pledged security of public faith, to indulge nature in a few hours of respite, and troubled, melancholy repose. From this sleep the queen was first startled by the voice of the sentinel at her door, who cried out to her, to save herself by flight—that this was the last proof of fidelity he could give—that they were upon him, and he was dead. Instantly he was cut down. A band of cruel ruffians and assassins, reeking with his blood, rushed into the chamber of the queen, and pierced with a hundred strokes of bayonets and poniards the bed, from whence this persecuted woman had but just time to fly almost naked, and, through ways unknown to the murderers, had escaped to seek refuge at the feet of a king and husband, not secure of his own life for a moment.

This king, to say no more of him, and this queen, and their infant children, (who once would have been the pride and hope of a great and generous people,) were then forced to abandon the sanctuary of the most splendid palace in the world, which they left swimming in blood, polluted by massacre, and strewed with scattered limbs and mutilated carcasses. Thence they were conducted into the capital of their kingdom. Two had been selected from the unprovoked, unresisted, promiscuous slaughter, which was made of the gentlemen of birth and family who composed

the king's body-guard. These two gentlemen, with all the parade of an execution of justice, were cruelly and publicly dragged to the block, and beheaded in the great court of the palace. Their heads were stuck upon spears, and led the procession; whilst the royal captives who followed in the train were slowly moved along, amidst the horrid yells, and shrilling screams, and frantic dances, and infamous contumelies, and all the unutterable abominations of the furies of hell, in the abused shape of the vilest of women. After they had been made to taste, drop by drop, more than the bitterness of death, in the slow torture of a journey of twelve miles, protracted to six hours, they were, under a guard, composed of those very soldiers who had thus conducted them through this famous triumph, lodged in one of the old palaces of Paris, now converted into a Bastile for kings.

Is this a triumph to be consecrated at altars? to be commemorated with grateful thanksgiving? to be offered to the divine humanity with fervent prayer and enthusiastic ejaculation?—These Theban and Thracian orgies, acted in France, and applauded only in the Old Jewry, I assure you, kindle prophetic enthusiasm in the minds but of very few people in this kingdom: although a saint and apostle, who may have revelations of his own, and who has so completely vanquished all the mean superstitions of the heart, may incline to think it pious and decorous to compare it with the entrance into the world of the Prince of Peace, proclaimed in a holy temple by a venerable sage, and not long before not worse announced by the voice of angels to quiet the innocence of shepherds.

I hear that the august person, who was the principal object of our preacher's triumph, though he supported himself, felt much on that shameful occasion. As a man, it became him to feel for his wife and his children, and the faithful guards of his person, that were massacred in cold blood about him; as a prince, it became him to feel for the strange and frightful transformation of his civilised subjects, and to be more grieved for them, than solicitous for himself. It derogates little from his fortitude, while it adds infinitely to the honour of his humanity. I am very sorry to say it, very sorry indeed, that such personages are in a situation in which it is not becoming in us to praise the virtues of the great.

I hear, and I rejoice to hear, that the great lady, the other object of the triumph, has borne that day, (one is interested that beings made for suffering should suffer well,) and that she bears all the succeeding days, that she bears the imprisonment of her husband, and her own captivity, and the exile of her friends, and the insulting adulation of addresses, and the whole weight of her accumulated wrongs, with a serene patience, in a manner suited to her rank and race, and becoming the offspring of a sovereign distinguished for her piety and her courage: that, like her, she has lofty sentiments; that she feels with the dignity of a Roman matron; that in the last extremity she will save herself from the last disgrace; and that, if she must fall, she will fall by no ignoble hand.

It is now sixteen or seventeen years since I saw the queen of France, then the dauphiness, at Versailles; and surely never lighted on this orb, which she hardly seemed to touch, a more delightful vision.

I saw her just above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she just began to move in; glittering like the morning star, full of life, and splendour, and joy! Oh! what a revolution! and what a heart must I have, to contemplate without emotion that elevation and that fall! Little did I dream, when she added titles of veneration to those of enthusiastic, distant, respectful love, that she should ever be obliged to carry the sharp antidote against disgrace concealed in that bosom; little did I dream that I should have lived to see such disasters fallen upon her in a nation of gallant men, in a nation of men of honour, and of cavaliers. I thought ten thousand swords must have leaped from their scabbards to avenge even a look that threatened her with insult. But the age of chivalry is gone. That of sophisters, economists, and calculators, has succeeded; and the glory of Europe is extinguished for ever. Never, never more shall we behold that generous loyalty to rank and sex, that proud submission, that dignified obedience, that subordination of the heart, which kept alive, even in servitude itself, the spirit of an exalted freedom. The unbought grace of life, the cheap defence of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise, is gone! It is gone! that sensibility of principle, that chastity of honour, which felt a stain like a wound, which inspired courage whilst it mitigated ferocity, which ennobled whatever it touched, and under which vice itself lost half its evil, by losing all its grossness.

This mixed system of opinion and sentiment had its origin in the ancient chivalry; and the principle, though varied in its appearance by the varying state of human affairs, subsisted and influenced through a

long succession of generations, even to the time we live in. If it should ever be totally extinguished, the loss I fear will be great. It is this which has given its character to modern Europe. It is this which has distinguished it under all its forms of government, and distinguished it to its advantage, from the states of Asia, and possibly from those states which flourished in the most brilliant periods of the antique world. It was this which, without confounding ranks, had produced a noble equality, and handed it down through all the gradations of social life. It was this opinion which mitigated kings into companions, and raised private men to be fellows with kings. Without force or opposition, it subdued the fierceness of pride and power ; it obliged sovereigns to submit to the soft collar of social esteem, compelled stern authority to submit to elegance, and gave a dominating vanquisher of laws, to be subdued by manners.

But now all is to be changed. All the pleasing illusions, which made power gentle, and obedience liberal, which harmonised the different shades of life, and which, by a bland assimilation, incorporated into politics the sentiments which beautify and soften private society, are to be dissolved by this new conquering empire of light and reason. All the decent drapery of life is to be rudely torn off. All the super-added ideas, furnished from the wardrobe of a moral imagination, which the heart owns, and the understanding ratifies, as necessary to cover the defects of our naked, shivering nature, and to raise it to dignity in our own estimation, are to be exploded as a ridiculous, absurd, and antiquated fashion.

On this scheme of things, a king is but a man, a

queen is but a woman ; a woman is but an animal ; and an animal not of the highest order. All homage paid to the sex in general as such, and without distinct views, is to be regarded as romance and folly. Regicide, and parricide, and sacrilege, are but fictions of superstition, corrupting jurisprudence by destroying its simplicity. The murder of a king, or a queen, or a bishop, or a father, are only common homicide ; and if the people are by any chance, or in any way, gainers by it, a sort of homicide much the most pardonable, and into which we ought not to make too severe a scrutiny.

On the scheme of this barbarous philosophy, which is the offspring of cold hearts and muddy understandings, and which is as void of solid wisdom as it is destitute of all taste and elegance, laws are to be supported only by their own terrors, and by the concern which each individual may find in them, from his own private speculations, or can spare to them from his own private interests. In the groves of *their* academy, at the end of every vista, you see nothing but the gallows. Nothing is left which engages the affections on the part of the commonwealth. On the principles of this mechanic philosophy, our institutions can never be embodied, if I may use the expression, in persons ; so as to create in us love, veneration, admiration, or attachment. But that sort of reason which banishes the affections is incapable of filling their place. These public affections, combined with manners, are required sometimes as supplements, sometimes as correctives, always as aids to law. The precept given by a wise man, as well as a great critic, for the construction of poems, is equally true as to states :—*Non satis est pulchra esse poemata,*

dulcia sunt. There ought to be a system of manners in every nation, which a well-formed mind would be disposed to relish. To make us love our country, our country ought to be lovely.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

THE FRENCH REPUBLIC.—Out of the tomb of the murdered monarchy in France has arisen a vast, tremendous, unformed spectre, in a far more terrific guise than any which ever yet have overpowered the imagination, and subdued the fortitude of man. Going straight forward to its end, unappalled by peril, unchecked by remorse, despising all common maxims and all common means, that hideous phantom overpowered those who could not believe it was possible she could at all exist, except on the principles, which habit rather than nature had persuaded them were necessary to their own particular welfare, and to their own ordinary modes of action.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

REASONS FOR NOT CONGRATULATING THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONISTS ON THEIR NEWLY-ACQUIRED LIBERTY.—I flatter myself that I love a manly, moral, regulated liberty as well as any gentleman of that society, be he who he will: and perhaps I have given as good proofs of my attachment to that cause, in the whole course of my public conduct. I think I envy liberty as little as they do, to any other nation. But I cannot stand forward, and give praise or blame to anything which relates to human actions, and human concerns, on a simple view of the object, as it stands stripped of every relation, in all the nakedness and solitude of metaphysical abstraction. Circumstances (which with some gentlemen pass for nothing) give in reality to every political principle

its distinguishing colour and discriminating effect. The circumstances are what render every civil and political scheme beneficial or noxious to mankind. Abstractedly speaking, government, as well as liberty, is good ; yet could I, in common sense, ten years ago, have felicitated France on her enjoyment of a government (for she then had a government) without inquiry what the nature of that government was, or how it was administered ? Can I now congratulate the same nation upon its freedom ? Is it because liberty in the abstract may be classed amongst the blessings of mankind, that I am seriously to felicitate a madman, who has escaped from the protecting restraint and wholesome darkness of his cell, on his restoration to the enjoyment of light and liberty ? Am I to congratulate a highwayman and murderer, who has broke prison, upon the recovery of his natural rights ? This would be to act over again the scene of the criminals condemned to the galleys, and their heroic deliverer the metaphysic knight of the sorrowful countenance.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF FRANCE.—What is the power of the house of commons, circumscribed and shut in by the immovable barriers of law, usages, positive rules of doctrine and practice, counterpoised by the house of lords, and every moment of its existence at the discretion of the crown to continue, prorogue, or dissolve us ? The power of the house of commons, direct or indirect, is indeed great ; and long may it be able to preserve its greatness, and the spirit belonging to true greatness, at the full ; and it will do so, as long as it can keep the breakers of law in India from becoming the makers of law

for England. The power, however, of the house of commons, when least diminished, is as a drop of water in the ocean, compared to that residing in a settled majority of your National Assembly. That assembly, since the destruction of the orders, has no fundamental law, no strict convention, no respected usage to restrain it. Instead of finding themselves obliged to conform to a fixed constitution, they have a power to make a constitution which shall conform to their designs. Nothing in heaven or upon earth can serve as a control on them. What ought to be the heads, the hearts, the dispositions, that are qualified, or that dare, not only to make laws under a fixed constitution, but at one heat to strike out a totally new constitution for a great kingdom, and every part of it, from the monarch on the throne to the vestry of a parish? But—“*fools rush in where angels fear to tread.*” In such a state of unbounded power, for undefined and undefinable purposes, the evil of a moral and almost physical inaptitude of the man to the function, must be the greatest we can conceive to happen in the management of human affairs. . . .

Already there appears a poverty of conception, a coarseness and vulgarity in all the proceedings of the Assembly, and of all their instructors. Their liberty is not liberal. Their science is presumptuous ignorance. Their humanity is savage and brutal.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

THE TERRORISTS IN FRANCE.—It is thus, and for the same end, that they endeavour to destroy that tribunal of conscience which exists independently of edicts and decrees. Your despots govern by terror. They know that he who fears God fears nothing else: and therefore they eradicate from the mind, through

their Voltaire, their Helvetius, and the rest of that infamous gang, that only sort of fear which generates true courage. Their object is, that their fellow-citizens may be under the dominion of no awe, but that of their committee of research, and of their lanterne.—*Letter to a Member of the National Assembly.*

WANT OF PRACTICAL WISDOM IN FRANCE AT THE PERIOD OF THE REVOLUTION.—What a number of faults have led to this multitude of misfortunes, and almost all from this one source,—that of considering certain general maxims, without attending to circumstances, to times, to places, to conjunctures, and to actors. If we do not attend scrupulously to all these, the medicine of to-day becomes the poison of to-morrow. If any measure was in the abstract better than another, it was to call the states—*ea visa salus morientibus una*.—Certainly it had the appearance.—But see the consequences of not attending to critical moments, of not regarding the symptoms which discriminate diseases, and which distinguish constitutions, complexions, and humours :

Mox erat hoc ipsum exitio ; furiisque relecti,
Ardebant ; ipsique suos, jam morte sub ægra,
Discissos nudis laniabant dentibus artus.

Thus the potion which was given to strengthen the constitution, to heal divisions, and to compose the minds of men, became the source of debility, frenzy, discord, and utter dissolution.—*Letter to a Member of the National Assembly.*

SUFFERINGS OF THE FRENCH PRIESTS IN THE REVOLUTION.—The priests were punished, after they had been robbed of their all, not for their vices, but for

their virtues and their piety, which made them an honour to their sacred profession, and to that nature of which we ought to be proud, since they belong to it.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

THE WAR AGAINST REVOLUTIONARY FRANCE.

THE TRUE MOTIVES FOR WAR AGAINST FRANCE.—
In that great war carried on against Louis XIV., for near eighteen years, government spared no pains to satisfy the nation, that though they were to be animated by a desire of glory, glory was not their ultimate object; but that everything dear to them, in religion, in law, in liberty, everything which as freemen, as Englishmen, and as citizens of the great commonwealth of Christendom, they had at heart, was then at stake. This was to know the true art of gaining the affections and confidence of a high-minded people; this was to understand human nature. A danger to avert a danger—a present inconvenience and suffering to prevent a foreseen future, and a worse calamity—these are the motives that belong to an animal, who, in his constitution, is at once adventurous and provident; circumspect and daring; whom his Creator has made, as the poet says, “of large discourse, looking before and after.” But never can a vehement and sustained spirit of fortitude be kindled in a people by a war of calculation. It has nothing that can keep the mind erect under the gusts of adversity. Even where men are willing, as sometimes they are, to barter their blood for lucre, to hazard their safety for the gratification of their avarice, the passion which animates them to that sort of conflict, like all the short-sighted pas-

sions, must see its objects distinct and near at hand. The passions of the lower order are hungry and impatient. Speculative plunder; contingent spoil; future, long adjourned, uncertain booty; pillage which must enrich a late posterity, and which possibly may not reach to posterity at all; these, for any length of time, will never support a mercenary war. The people are in the right. The calculation of profit in all such wars is false. On balancing the account of such wars, ten thousand hogsheads of sugar are purchased at ten thousand times their price. The blood of man should never be shed but to redeem the blood of man. It is well shed for our family, for our friends, for our God, for our country, for our kind. The rest is vanity; the rest is crime. —*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

SPIRIT OF PROSELYTISM AND AGGRANDISEMENT IN FRANCE.—In the Revolution of France two sorts of men were principally concerned in giving a character and determination to its pursuits: the philosophers and the politicians. They took different ways, but they met in the same end. The philosophers had one predominant object, which they pursued with a fanatical fury, that is, the utter extirpation of religion. To that every question of empire was subordinate. They had rather domineer in a parish of atheists, than rule over a Christian world. Their temporal ambition was wholly subservient to their proselytising spirit, in which they were not exceeded by Mahomet himself.

They, who have made but superficial studies in the natural history of the human mind, have been taught to look on religious opinions as the only cause of enthusiastic zeal, and sectarian propagation. But

there is no doctrine whatever, on which men can warm, that is not capable of the very same effect. The social nature of man impels him to propagate his principles, as much as physical impulses urge him to propagate his kind. The passions give zeal and vehemence. The understanding bestows design and system. The whole man moves under the discipline of his opinions. Religion is among the most powerful causes of enthusiasm. When anything concerning it becomes an object of much meditation, it cannot be indifferent to the mind. They who do not love religion, hate it. The rebels to God perfectly abhor the author of their being. They hate him "with all their heart, with all their mind, with all their soul, and with all their strength." He never presents himself to their thoughts, but to menace and alarm them. They cannot strike the sun out of heaven, but they are able to raise a smouldering smoke that obscures him from their own eyes. Not being able to revenge themselves on God, they have a delight in vicariously defacing, degrading, torturing, and tearing in pieces, his image in man. Let no one judge of them by what he has conceived of them, when they were not incorporated, and had no lead. They were then only passengers in a common vehicle. They were then carried along with the general motion of religion in the community, and, without being aware of it, partook of its influence. In that situation, at worst, their nature was left free to counterwork their principles. They despaired of giving any very general currency to their opinions. They considered them as a reserved privilege for the chosen few. But when the possibility of dominion, lead, and propagation, presented

itself, and that the ambition, which before had so often made them hypocrites, might rather gain than lose by a daring avowal of their sentiments, then the nature of this infernal spirit, which has "evil for its good," appeared in its full perfection. Nothing indeed but the possession of some power can with any certainty discover what at the bottom is the true character of any man. Without reading the speeches of Vergniaud, Françian of Nantz, Isnard, and some others of that sort, it would not be easy to conceive the passion, rancour, and malice of their tongues and hearts. They worked themselves up to a perfect frenzy against religion and all its professors. They tore the reputation of the clergy to pieces by their infuriated declamations and invectives, before they lacerated their bodies by their massacres. This fanatical atheism left out, we omit the principal feature in the French Revolution, and a principal consideration with regard to the effects to be expected from a peace with it.

The other sort of men were the politicians. To them, who had little or not at all reflected on the subject, religion was in itself no object of love or hatred. They disbelieved it, and that was all. Neutral with regard to that object, they took the side which in the present state of things might best answer their purposes. They soon found that they could not do without the philosophers; and the philosophers soon made them sensible, that the destruction of religion was to supply them with means of conquest, first at home and then abroad. The philosophers were the active internal agitators, and supplied the spirit and principles: the second gave the practical direction. Sometimes the one predomi-

nated in the composition, sometimes the other. The only difference between them was in the necessity of concealing the general design for a time, and in their dealing with foreign nations; the fanatics going straight forward and openly, the politicians by the surer mode of zigzag. In the course of events this, among other causes, produced fierce and bloody contentions between them. But at the bottom they thoroughly agreed in all the objects of ambition and irreligion, and substantially in all the means of promoting these ends.

Without question, to bring about the unexampled event of the French Revolution, the concurrence of a very great number of views and passions was necessary. In that stupendous work, no one principle, by which the human mind may have its faculties at once invigorated and depraved, was left unemployed; but I can speak it to a certainty, and support it by undoubted proofs, that the ruling principle of those who acted in the Revolution *as statesmen*, had the exterior aggrandisement of France as their ultimate end in the most minute part of the internal changes that were made. We, who of late years have been drawn from an attention to foreign affairs by the importance of our domestic discussions, cannot easily form a conception of the general eagerness of the active and energetic part of the French nation, itself the most active and energetic of all nations, previous to its Revolution, upon that subject. I am convinced that the foreign speculators in France, under the old government, were twenty to one of the same description then or now in England; and few of that description there were, who did not emulously set forward the Revolution. The whole official system,

particularly in the diplomatic part, the regulars, the irregulars, down to the clerks in office (a corps, without all comparison, more numerous than the same amongst us), co-operated in it. All the intriguers in foreign politics, all the spies, all the intelligencers, actually or late in function, all the candidates for that sort of employment, acted solely upon that principle.

On that system of aggrandisement there was but one mind: but two violent factions arose about the means. The first wished France, diverted from the politics of the continent, to attend solely to her marine, to feed it by an increase of commerce, and thereby to overpower England on her own element. They contended, that if England were disabled, the powers on the continent would fall into their proper subordination; that it was England which deranged the whole continental system of Europe. The others, who were by far the more numerous, though not the most outwardly prevalent at court, considered this plan for France as contrary to her genius, her situation, and her natural means. They agreed as to the ultimate object, the reduction of the British power, and, if possible, its naval power; but they considered an ascendancy on the continent as a necessary preliminary to that undertaking. They argued, that the proceedings of England herself had proved the soundness of this policy. That her greatest and ablest statesmen had not considered the support of a continental balance against France as a deviation from the principle of her naval power, but as one of the most effectual modes of carrying it into effect. That such had been her policy ever since the Revolution, during which period the naval strength of

Great Britain had gone on increasing in the direct ratio of her interference in the politics of the continent. With much stronger reason ought the politics of France to take the same direction; as well for pursuing objects which her situation would dictate to her, though England had no existence, as for counteracting the politics of that nation; to France continental politics are primary; they looked on them only of secondary consideration to England, and, however necessary, but as means necessary to an end.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

POSITION OF ENGLAND WITH REGARD TO FRANCE DURING THE PERIOD OF A CONTINENTAL WAR.—When Louis XIV. had made himself master of one of the largest and most important provinces of Spain; when he had in a manner overrun Lombardy, and was thundering at the gates of Turin; when he had mastered almost all Germany on this side of the Rhine; when he was on the point of ruining the august fabric of the empire; when, with the elector of Bavaria in his alliance, hardly anything interposed between him and Vienna; when the Turk hung with a mighty force over the empire on the other side; I do not know, that in the beginning of 1704 (that is, in the third year of the renovated war with Louis XIV.) the state of Europe was so truly alarming. To England it certainly was not. Holland (and Holland is a matter to England of value inestimable) was then powerful, was then independent, and, though greatly endangered, was then full of energy and spirit. But the great resource of Europe was in England: not in a sort of England detached from the rest of the world, and amusing herself with the puppet-show of a naval power, (it

can be no better, whilst all the sources of that power, and of every sort of power, are precarious,) but in that sort of England, who considered herself as embodied with Europe; but in that sort of England, who, sympathetic with the adversity or the happiness of mankind, felt that nothing in human affairs was foreign to her. We may consider it as a sure axiom, that, as on the one hand no confederacy of the least effect or duration can exist against France, of which England is not only a part, but the head, so neither can England pretend to cope with France but as connected with the body of Christendom.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

There never was, nor is, nor ever will be, nor ever can be, the least rational hope of making an impression on France by any continental powers, if England is not a part, is not the directing part, is not the soul, of the whole confederacy against it.

This, so far as it is an anticipation of future, is grounded on the whole tenor of former history.—*Heads for the Consideration of the Present State of Affairs.* 1792.

TONE TO BE ADOPTED BY GOVERNMENT IN MAKING WAR AGAINST FRANCE.—After such an elaborate display had been made of the injustice and insolence of an enemy, who seems to have been irritated by every one of the means, which had been commonly used with effect to soothe the rage of intemperate power, the natural result would be, that the scabbard, in which we in vain attempted to plunge our sword, should have been thrown away with scorn. It would have been natural, that, rising in the fullness of their might, insulted majesty, despised dignity, vio-

lated justice, rejected supplication, patience goaded into fury, would have poured out all the length of the reins upon all the wrath which they had so long restrained. It might have been expected, that, emulous of the glory of the youthful hero* in alliance with him, touched by the example of what one man, well formed, and well placed, may do in the most desperate state of affairs, convinced there is a courage of the cabinet full as powerful, and far less vulgar than that of the field, our minister would have changed the whole line of that useless, prosperous prudence, which had hitherto produced all the effects of the blindest temerity. If he found his situation full of danger, (and I do not deny that it is perilous in the extreme,) he must feel that it is also full of glory; and that he is placed on a stage, than which no muse of fire, that had ascended the highest heaven of invention, could imagine anything more awful and august. It was hoped, that, in this swelling scene in which he moved with some of the first potentates of Europe for his fellow-actors, and with so many of the rest for the anxious spectators of a part, which, as he plays it, determines for ever their destiny and his own, like Ulysses in the unravelling point of the epic story, he would have thrown off his patience and his rags together; and, stripped of unworthy disguises, he would have stood forth in the form, and in the attitude, of an hero. On that day, it was thought he would have assumed the port of Mars; that he would bid to be brought forth from their hideous kennel (where his scrupulous tenderness had too long immured them) those impatient dogs of war, whose fierce regards affright

* The Archduke Charles of Austria.

even the minister of vengeance that feeds them; that he would let them loose, in famine, fever, plagues, and death, upon a guilty race, to whose frame, and to all whose habit, order, peace, religion, and virtue, are alien and abhorrent. It was expected that he would at last have thought of active and effectual war; that he would no longer amuse the British lion in the chase of mice and rats; that he would no longer employ the whole naval power of Great Britain, once the terror of the world, to prey upon the miserable remains of a peddling commerce, which the enemy did not regard, and from which none could profit. It was expected, that he would have re-asserted the justice of his cause; that he would have re-animated whatever remained to him of his allies, and endeavoured to recover those whom their fears had led astray; that he would have re-kindled the martial ardour of his citizens; that he would have held out to them the example of their ancestry, the assertor of Europe, and the scourge of French ambition; that he would have reminded them of a posterity, which if this nefarious robbery, under the fraudulent name and false colour of a government, should in full power be seated in the heart of Europe, must for ever be consigned to vice, impiety, barbarism, and the most ignominious slavery of body and mind. In so holy a cause it was presumed, that he would (as in the beginning of the war he did) have opened all the temples; and with prayer, with fasting, and with supplication, (better directed than to the grim Moloch of regicide in France,) have called upon us to raise that united cry, which has so often stormed heaven, and with a pious violence forced down blessings upon a repentant

people. It was hoped that when he had invoked upon his endeavours the favourable regard of the Protector of the human race, it would be seen that his menaces to the enemy, and his prayers to the Almighty, were not followed, but accompanied, with correspondent action. It was hoped that his shrilling trumpet should be heard, not to announce a show, but to sound a charge.

Such a tone, as I guessed the minister would have taken, I am very sure, is the true, unsuborned, unsophisticated language of genuine, natural feeling, under the smart of patience exhausted and abused. —*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

ENERGY REQUIRED TO ENABLE ENGLAND TO CARRY ON THE WAR.—For one (if they be properly treated), I despair neither of the public fortune, nor of the public mind. There is much to be done undoubtedly, and much to be retrieved. We must walk in new ways, or we can never encounter our enemy in his devious march. We are not at an end of our struggle, nor near it. Let us not deceive ourselves: we are at the beginning of great troubles. I readily acknowledge that the state of public affairs is infinitely more unpromising, than at the period I have just now alluded to; and the position of all the powers of Europe, in relation to us, and in relation to each other, is more intricate and critical beyond all comparison. Difficult indeed is our situation. In all situations of difficulty men will be influenced in the part they take, not only by the reason of the case, but by the peculiar turn of their own character. The same ways to safety do not present themselves to all men, nor to the same men in different tempers. There is a courageous wisdom: there is also

a false, reptile prudence, the result not of caution, but of fear. Under misfortunes it often happens that the nerves of the understanding are so relaxed, the pressing peril of the hour so completely confounds all the faculties, that no future danger can be properly provided for, can be justly estimated, can be so much as fully seen. The eye of the mind is dazzled and vanquished. An abject distrust of ourselves, an extravagant admiration of the enemy, present us with no hope but in a compromise with his pride, by a submission to his will. This short plan of policy is the only counsel which will obtain a hearing. We plunge into a dark gulf with all the rash precipitation of fear. The nature of courage is, without a question, to be conversant with danger: but in the palpable night of their terrors, men under consternation suppose, not that it is the danger, which, by a sure instinct, calls out the courage to resist it, but that it is the courage which produceth the danger. They therefore seek for a refuge from their fears in the fears themselves, and consider a temporising meanness as the only source of safety.

The rules and definitions of prudence can rarely be exact; never universal. I do not deny, that, in small, truckling states, a timely compromise with power has often been the means, and the only means, of drawing out their puny existence: but a great state is too much envied, too much dreaded, to find safety in humiliation. To be secure, it must be respected. Power, and eminence, and consideration, are things not to be begged. They must be commanded: and they, who supplicate for mercy from others, can never hope for justice through themselves. What justice they are to obtain, as the

arms of an enemy, depends upon his character ; and that they ought well to know before they implicitly confide.

Much controversy there has been in parliament and not a little amongst us out of doors, about the instrumental means of this nation towards the maintenance of her dignity, and the assertion of her rights. On the most elaborate and correct details of facts, the result seems to be, that at no time has the wealth and power of Great Britain been so considerable as it is at this very perilous moment. We have a vast interest to preserve, and we possess great means of preserving it : but it is to be remembered that the artificer may be incumbered by his tools and that resources may be among impediments. Wealth is the obedient and laborious slave of virtue and of public honour, then wealth is in its place and has its use : but if this order is changed, and honour is to be sacrificed to the conservation of riches, riches, which have neither eyes nor hands, and nothing truly vital in them, cannot long survive the being of their vivifying powers, their legitimate masters, and their potent protectors. If we command our wealth, we shall be rich and free : if our wealth commands us, we are poor indeed. We are bought by the enemy with the treasure from our own coffers. Too great a sense of the value of subordinate interest may be the very source of danger, as well as the certain ruin of interest of a superior order. Often has a man lost his life because he would not submit to hazard all in defending it. A display of our wealth before robbers is not the way to restrain their boldness, or to lessen their rapacity. This display is made, I know,

persuade the people of England that thereby we shall awe the enemy, and improve the terms of our capitulation: it is made, not that we should fight with more animation, but that we should supplicate with better hopes. We are mistaken. We have an enemy to deal with who never regarded our contest as a measuring and weighing of purses. He is the Gaul that puts his *sword* into the scale. He is more tempted with our wealth as booty, than terrified with it as power. But let us be rich or poor, let us be either in what proportion we may, nature is false or this is true, that where the essential public force (of which money is but a part) is in any degree upon a par in a conflict between nations, that state, which is resolved to hazard its existence rather than to abandon its objects, must have an infinite advantage over that which is resolved to yield rather than to carry its resistance beyond a certain point. Humanly speaking, that people, which bounds its efforts only with its being, must give the law to that nation which will not push its opposition beyond its convenience.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

DEPENDENCE OF A WAR ON ITS POPULARITY.—In matters of state, a constitutional competence to act is in many cases the smallest part of the question. Without disputing (God forbid I should dispute) the sole competence of the king and the parliament, each in its province, to decide on war and peace, I venture to say, no war *can* be long carried on against the will of the people. This war, in particular, cannot be carried on unless they are enthusiastically in favour of it. Acquiescence will not do. There must be zeal. Universal zeal in such a cause, and at such a time as this is, cannot be looked for; neither is it

necessary. Zeal in the larger part carries the force of the whole. Without this, no government, certainly not our government, is capable of a great war.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

ON THE PROBABLE LENGTH OF THE WAR WITH FRANCE.—Whenever the adverse party has raised a cry for peace with the regicide, the answer has been little more than this, “that the administration wished for such a peace, full as much as the opposition; but that the time was not convenient for making it.” Whatever else has been said was much in the same spirit. Reasons of this kind never touched the substantial merits of the war. They were in the nature of dilatory pleas, exceptions of form, previous questions. Accordingly all the arguments against a compliance with what was represented as the popular desire, (urged on with all possible vehemence and earnestness by the jacobins,) have appeared flat and languid, feeble and evasive. They appeared to aim only at gaining time. They never entered into the peculiar and distinctive character of the war. They spoke neither to the understanding nor to the heart. Cold as ice themselves, they never could kindle in our breast a spark of that zeal which is necessary to a conflict with an adverse zeal; much less were they made to infuse into our minds that stubborn, persevering spirit, which alone is capable of bearing up against those vicissitudes of fortune which will probably occur, and those burthens, which must be inevitably borne, in a long war. I speak it emphatically, and with a desire that it should be marked, in a *long* war; because, without such a war, no experience has yet told us, that a dangerous power has ever been reduced to measure or to reason. I do not throw

back my view to the Peloponnesian war of twenty-seven years; nor to two of the Punic wars, the first of twenty-four, the second of eighteen; nor to the more recent war concluded by the treaty of Westphalia, which continued, I think, for thirty. I go to what is but just fallen behind living memory, and immediately touches our own country. Let the portion of our history from the year 1689 to 1713 be brought before us.

While that first war (which was ill smothered by the treaty of Ryswick) slept in the thin ashes of a seeming peace, a new conflagration was in its immediate causes. A fresh and a far greater war was in preparation. A year had hardly elapsed when arrangements were made for renewing the contest with tenfold fury. The steps which were taken at that time, to compose, to reconcile, to unite, and to discipline, all Europe against the growth of France, certainly furnish to a statesman the finest and most interesting part in the history of that great period. It formed the master-piece of King William's policy, dexterity, and perseverance. Full of the idea of preserving, not only a local civil liberty, united with order, to our country, but to embody it in the political liberty, the order, and the independence of nations united under a natural head, the king called upon his parliament to put itself into a posture "*to preserve to England the weight and influence it at present had on the councils and affairs* ABROAD. It will be requisite *Europe* should see you will not be wanting to yourselves."

Baffled as that monarch was, and almost heart-broken at the disappointment he met with in the mode he first proposed for that great end, he held

on his course. He was faithful to his object; and in councils, as in arms, over and over again repulsed, over and over again he returned to the charge. . . .

His majesty did determine; and did take and pursue his resolution. In all the tottering imbecility of a new government, and with parliament totally unmanageable, he persevered. He persevered to expel the fears of his people by his fortitude—to steady their fickleness by his constancy—to expand their narrow prudence, by his enlarged wisdom—to sink their factious temper in his public spirit.—In spite of his people he resolved to make them great and glorious; to make England, inclined to shrink into her narrow self, the arbitress of Europe, the tutelary angel of the human race. In spite of the ministers, who staggered under the weight that his mind imposed upon theirs, unsupported as they felt themselves by the popular spirit, he infused into them his own soul, he renewed in them their ancient heart, he rallied them in the same cause. . . .

But now they were fairly embarked, they were obliged to go with the course of the vessel; and the whole nation, split before into an hundred adverse factions, with a king at its head evidently declining to his tomb, the whole nation, lords, commons, and people, proceeded as one body, informed by one soul. Under the British union, the union of Europe was consolidated; and it long held together with a degree of cohesion, firmness, and fidelity, not known before or since in any political combination of that extent.

Just as the last hand was given to this immense and complicated machine, the master workman died: but the work was formed on true mechanical prin-

ciples, and it was as truly wrought. It went by the impulse it had received from the first mover. The man was dead; but the grand alliance survived in which King William lived and reigned. That heartless and dispirited people, whom Lord Somers had represented about two years before, as dead in energy and operation, continued that war to which it was supposed they were unequal in mind, and in means, for nearly thirteen years.

For what have I entered into all this detail? To what purpose have I recalled your view to the end of the last century? It has been done to show that the British nation was then a great people—to point out how and by what means they came to be exalted above the vulgar level, and to take that lead which they assumed among mankind. To qualify us for that pre-eminence, we had then a high mind and a constancy unconquerable; we were then inspired with no flashy passions, but such as were durable as well as warm, such as corresponded to the great interests we had at stake. This force of character was inspired, as all such spirit must ever be, from above. Government gave the impulse. As well may we fancy, that, of itself, the sea will swell, and that without winds the billows will insult the adverse shore, as that the gross mass of the people will be moved, and elevated, and continue by a steady and permanent direction to bear upon one point, without the influence of superior authority, or superior mind.

This impulse ought, in my opinion, to have been given in this war; and it ought to have been continued to it at every instant. It is made, if ever war was made, to touch all the great springs of action in the human breast. It ought not to have been a war

of apology. The minister had, in this conflict, wherewithal to glory in success; to be consoled in adversity; to hold high his principle in all fortunes. If it were not given him to support the falling edifice, he ought to bury himself under the ruins of the civilized world. All the art of Greece, and all the pride and power of eastern monarchs, never heaped upon their ashes so grand a monument.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

AID TO BE GIVEN TO THE ROYALISTS IN FRANCE.—
It would not be at all difficult to prove, that an army of a hundred thousand men, horse, foot, and artillery, might have been employed against the enemy on the very soil which he has usurped, at a far less expense than has been squandered away upon tropical adventures. In these adventures it was not an enemy we had to vanquish, but a cemetery to conquer. In carrying on the war in the West Indies, the hostile sword is merciful; the country in which we engage is the dreadful enemy. There the European conqueror finds a cruel defeat in the very fruits of his success. Every advantage is but a new demand on England for recruits to the West Indian grave. In a West India war, the regicides have, for their troops, a race of fierce barbarians, to whom the poisoned air, in which our youth inhale certain death, is salubrity and life. To them the climate is the surest and most faithful of allies.

Had we carried on the war on the side of France which looks towards the Channel or the Atlantic, we should have attacked our enemy on his weak and unarmed side. We should not have to reckon on the loss of a man, who did not fall in battle. We should have an ally in the heart of the country, who, to our

hundred thousand, would at one time have added eighty thousand men at the least, and all animated by principle, by enthusiasm, and by vengeance; motives which secured them to the cause in a very different manner from some of those allies whom we subsidized with millions. This ally, (or rather this principal in the war,) by the confession of the regicide himself, was more formidable to him than all his other foes united. Warring there, we should have led our arms to the capital of Wrong. Defeated, we could not fail (proper precautions taken) of a sure retreat. Stationary, and only supporting the royalists, an impenetrable barrier, an impregnable rampart, would have been formed between the enemy and his naval power. We are probably the only nation who have declined to act against an enemy, when it might have been done in his own country; and who having an armed, a powerful, and a long victorious ally in that country, declined all effectual co-operation, and suffered him to perish for want of support. On the plan of a war in France, every advantage that our allies might obtain would be doubled in its effect. Disasters on the one side might have a fair chance of being compensated by victories on the other. Had we brought the main of our force to bear upon that quarter, all the operations of the British and Imperial crowns would have been combined. The war would have had system, correspondence, and a certain direction. But as the war has been pursued, the operations of the two crowns have not the smallest degree of mutual bearing or relation.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

THE WAR REALLY A WAR OF THE JACOBINS AGAINST EUROPE.—As long as these powers flattered

themselves that the menace of force would produce the effect of force, they acted on those declarations : but when their menaces failed of success, their efforts took a new direction. It did not appear to them that virtue and heroism ought to be purchased by millions of rix-dollars. It is a dreadful truth, but it is a truth that cannot be concealed ; in ability, in dexterity, in the distinctness of their views, the jacobins are our superiors. They saw the thing right from the very beginning. Whatever were the first motives to the war among politicians, they saw that in its spirit, and for its objects, it was a *civil war* ; and as such they pursued it. It is a war between the partisans of the ancient, civil, moral, and political order of Europe, against a sect of fanatical and ambitious atheists which means to change them all. It is not France extending a foreign empire over other nations : it is a sect aiming at universal empire, and beginning with the conquest of France. The leaders of that sect secured the *centre of Europe* ; and that secured, they knew, that whatever might be the event of battles and sieges, their *cause* was victorious. —*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

RIGHT OF EUROPE TO MAKE WAR UPON THE FRENCH REPUBLIC.—In describing the nuisance erected by so pestilential a manufactory, by the construction of so infamous a brothel, by digging a night-cellar for such thieves, murderers, and house-breakers, as never infested the world, I am so far from aggravating, that I have fallen infinitely short of the evil. No man who has attended to the particulars of what has been done in France, and combined them with the principles there asserted, can possibly doubt it. When I compare with this great cause of nations, the trifling

points of honour, the still more contemptible points of interest, the light ceremonies and undefinable punctilios, the disputes about precedency, the lowering or the hoisting of a sail, the dealing in a hundred or two of wild cat-skins on the other side of the globe, which have often kindled up the flames of war between nations, I stand astonished at those persons who do not feel a resentment, not more natural than politic, at the atrocious insults that this monstrous compound offers to the dignity of every nation, and who are not alarmed with what it threatens to their safety.

I have therefore been decidedly of opinion, with our declaration at Whitehall, in the beginning of this war, that the vicinage of Europe had not only a right, but an indispensable duty, and an exigent interest, to denunciate this new work before it had produced the danger we have so sorely felt, and which we shall long feel. The example of what is done by France is too important not to have a vast and extensive influence; and that example, backed with its power, must bear with great force on those who are near it; especially on those who shall recognise the pretended republic on the principle upon which it now stands. It is not an old structure which you have found as it is, and are not to dispute of the original end and design with which it had been so fashioned. It is a recent wrong, and can plead no prescription. It violates the rights upon which not only the community of France, but those on which all communities are founded. The principles on which they proceed are *general* principles, and are as true in England as in any other country. They, who (though with the purest intentions) recognise the authority of these regi-

cides and robbers upon principle, justify their acts and establish them as precedents. It is a question not between France and England. It is a question between property and force. The property claims; and its claim has been allowed. The property of the nation is the nation. They, who massacre, plunder, and expel, the body of the proprietary, are murderers and robbers. The state, in its essence, must be moral and just: and it may be so, though a tyrant or usurper should be accidentally at the head of it. This is a thing to be lamented: but this notwithstanding, the body of the commonwealth may remain in all its integrity and be perfectly sound in its composition. The present case is different. It is not a revolution in government. It is not the victory of party over party. It is a destruction and decomposition of the whole society; which never can be made of right by any faction, however powerful, nor without terrible consequences to all about it, both in the act and in the example. This pretended republic is founded in crimes, and exists by wrong and robbery; and wrong and robbery, far from a title to anything, is war with mankind. To be at peace with robbery is to be an accomplice with it.

Mere locality does not constitute a body politic. Had Cade and his gang got possession of London, they would not have been the lord mayor, aldermen, and common council. The body politic of France existed in the majesty of its throne, in the dignity of its nobility, in the honour of its gentry, in the sanctity of its clergy, in the reverence of its magistracy, in the weight and consideration due to its landed property in the several baillages, in the respect due to its moveable substance represented by the corporations

f the kingdom. All these particular *moleculæ* united form the great mass of what is truly the body politic in all countries. They are so many deposits and receptacles of justice; because they can only exist by justice. Nation is a moral essence, not a geographical arrangement, or a denomination of the nomenclator. France, though out of her territorial possession, exists; because the sole possible claimant, I mean the proprietary, and the government to which the proprietary adheres, exists, and claims. God forbid, that if you were expelled from your house by ruffians and assassins, that I should call the material walls, doors, and windows of——, the ancient and honourable family of——. Am I to transfer to the intruders, who not content to turn you out naked to the world, would rob you of your very name, all the esteem and respect I owe to you? The regicides in France are not France. France is out of her bounds, but the kingdom is the same.

To illustrate my opinions on this subject, let us suppose a case, which, after what has happened, we cannot think absolutely impossible, though the augury is to be abominated, and the event deprecated with our most ardent prayers. Let us suppose then, that our gracious sovereign was sacrilegiously murdered; his exemplary queen, at the head of the matronage of this land, murdered in the same manner; that those princesses, whose beauty and modest elegance are the ornaments of the country, and who are the leaders and patterns of the ingenuous youth of their sex, were put to a cruel and ignominious death, with hundreds of others, mothers and daughters, ladies of the first distinction;—that the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York, princes the hope

and pride of the nation, with all their brethren, were forced to fly from the knives of assassins—that the whole body of our excellent clergy were either massacred or robbed of all, and transported—the Christian religion in all its denominations, forbidden and persecuted—the law totally, fundamentally, and in all its parts destroyed—the judges put to death by revolutionary tribunals—the peers and commons robbed to the last acre of their estates; massacred if they staid, or obliged to seek life in flight, in exile and in beggary—that the whole landed property should share the very same fate—that every military and naval officer of honour and rank, almost to a man, should be placed in the same description of confiscation and exile—that the principal merchants and bankers should be drawn out, as from a hen-coop, for slaughter—that the citizens of our greatest and most flourishing cities, when the hand and the machinery of the hangman were not found sufficient, should have been collected in the public squares, and massacred by thousands with cannon;—if three hundred thousand others should have been doomed to a situation worse than death in noisome and pestilential prisons;—in such a case, is it in the faction of robbers I am to look for my country? Would this be the England that you and I, and even strangers, admired, honoured, loved, and cherished? Would the exiles of England alone be my government and my fellow-citizens? Would not their places of refuge be my temporary country? Would not all my duties and all my affections be there, and there only? Should I consider myself as a traitor to my country, and deserving of death, if I knocked at the door and heart of every potentate in Christendom

succour my friends, and to avenge them on their enemies? Could I, in any way, show myself more a patriot? What should I think of those potentates who insulted their suffering brethren; who treated them as vagrants, or at least as mendicants; and could find no allies, no friends, but in regicide murderers and robbers? What ought I to think and feel, if, being geographers instead of kings, they recognised the desolated cities, the wasted fields, and the rivers polluted with blood, of this geometrical measurement, as the honourable member of Europe, called England? In that condition what should we think of Sweden, Denmark, or Holland, or whatever power afforded us a churlish and treacherous hospitality, if they should invite us to join the standard of our king, our laws, and our religion, if they should give us a direct promise of protection—if, after all this, taking advantage of our deplorable situation, which left us no choice, they were to treat us as the lowest and vilest of all mercenaries? If they were to send us far from the aid of our king, and our suffering country, to squander us away in the most pestilential climates for a venal enlargement of their own territories, for the purpose of trucking them, when obtained, with those very robbers and murderers they had called upon us to oppose with our blood? What would be our sentiments, if in that miserable service we were not to be considered either as English, or as Swedes, Dutch, Danes, but as outcasts of the human race? Whilst we were fighting those battles of their interest, and as their soldiers, how should we feel if we were to be excluded from all their cartels? How must we feel, if the pride and flower of the English nobility and gentry, who might escape the

pestilential clime, and the devouring sword, should, if taken prisoners, be delivered over as rebel subjects, to be condemned as rebels, as traitors, as the vilest of all criminals, by tribunals formed of Maroon negro slaves, covered over with the blood of their masters, who were made free and organised into judges, for their robberies and murders? What should we feel under this inhuman, insulting, and barbarous protection of Muscovites, Swedes, or Hollanders? Should we not obtest Heaven, and whatever justice there is yet on earth? Oppression makes wise men mad; but the distemper is still the madness of the wise, which is better than the sobriety of fools. The cry is the voice of sacred misery, exalted, not into wild raving, but into the sanctified frenzy of prophecy and inspiration—in that bitterness of soul, in that indignation of suffering virtue, in that exaltation of despair, would not persecuted English loyalty cry out, with an awful warning voice, and denounce the destruction that waits on monarchs, who consider fidelity to them as the most degrading of all vices; who suffer it to be punished as the most abominable of all crimes; and who have no respect but for rebels, traitors, regicides, and furious negro slaves, whose crimes have broke their chains? Would not this warm language of high indignation have more of sound reason in it, more of real affection, more of true attachment, than all the lullabies of flatterers, who would hush monarchs to sleep in the arms of death? Let them be well convinced, that if ever this example should prevail in its whole extent, it will have its full operation. Whilst kings stand firm on their base, though under that base there is a sure-wrought mine, there will not be wanting to their

leaves a single person of those who are attached to their fortune, and not to their persons or cause: but hereafter none will support a tottering throne. Some will fly for fear of being crushed under the ruin, some will join in making it. They will seek in the destruction of royalty, fame, and power, and wealth, and the homage of kings, with *Reubel*, with *Carnot*, with *Revellière*, and with the *Merlins* and the *Talliens*, rather than suffer exile and beggary with the *Condés*, or the *Broglis*, the *Castries*, the *D'Avrais*, the *Serrents*, the *Cazalés*, and the long line of loyal suffering, patriot nobility, or to be butchered with the oracles and the victims of the laws, the *D'Ormesons*, the *D'Espremenils*, and the *Malesherbes*. This example we shall give, if instead of adhering to our fellows in a cause which is an honour to us all, we abandon the lawful government and lawful corporate body of France, to hunt for a shameful and ruinous fraternity, with this odious usurpation that disgraces civilised society and the human race.

And is then example nothing? It is everything. Example is the school of mankind, and they will learn at no other. This war is a war against that example. It is not a war for Louis the Eighteenth, or even for the property, virtue, fidelity of France. It is a war for George the Third, for Francis the Second, and for all the dignity, property, honour, virtue, and religion of England, of Germany, and of all nations.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace*.

ABSURDITY OF COMPARING THE FRENCH DIRECTORY WITH THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION.—To dispose us towards this peace,—an attempt, in which our author has, I do not know whether to call it, the good, or ill fortune to agree with whatever is most seditious,

factions, and treasonable in this country, we are told by many dealers in speculation, but not so distinctly by the author himself, (too great distinctness of affirmation not being his fault,)—but we are told, that the French have lately obtained a very pretty sort of constitution, and that it resembles the British constitution as if they had been twinned together in the womb—*mirè sagaces fallere hospites discrimen obscurum*. It may be so; but I confess I am not yet made to it; nor is the noble author. He finds the “elements” excellent; but the disposition very inartificial indeed. Contrary to what we might expect at Paris—the meat is good, the cookery abominable. I agree with him fully in the last; and if I were forced to allow the first, I should still think, with our old coarse bye-word—that the same power, which furnished all their former *restaurateurs*, sent also their present cook. I have a great opinion of Thomas Paine, and of all his productions; I remember his having been one of the committee for forming one of their annual constitutions; I mean the admirable constitution of 1793, after having been a chamber council to the no less admirable constitution of 1791. This pious patriot has his eyes still directed to his native country, notwithstanding her ingratitude to so kind a benefactor. This outlaw of England, and lawgiver to France, is now, in secret probably, trying his hand again: and inviting us to him by making his constitution such, as may give his disciples in England some plausible pretext for going into the house, that he has opened. We have discovered, it seems, that all, which the boasted wisdom of our ancestors has laboured to bring to perfection for six or seven centuries, is nearly, or altogether, matched

in six or seven days, at the leisure hours and sober intervals of Citizen Thomas Paine.

“ But though the treacherous tapster Thomas,
 “ Hangs a new Angel, two doors from us,
 “ As fine as daubers’ hands can make it,
 “ In hopes that strangers may mistake it ;
 “ We think it both a shame and sin
 “ To quit the good old Angel Inn.”

Indeed, in this good old house, where everything, at least, is well aired, I shall be content to put up my fatigued horses, and here take a bed for the long night, that begins to darken upon me.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

THE LOWER AND HIGHER CLASSES DURING THE PERIOD OF A WAR.—I know that it has been a cry usual on this occasion, as it has been upon occasions where such a cry could have less apparent justification, that great distress and misery have been the consequence of this war, by the burthens brought and laid upon the people. But to know where the burthen really lies, and where it presses, we must divide the people. As to the common people, their stock is in their persons and in their earnings. I deny that the stock of their persons is diminished in a greater proportion than the common sources of populousness abundantly fill up; I mean constant employment; proportioned pay according to the produce of the soil, and, where the soil fails, according to the operation of the general capital; plentiful nourishment to vigorous labour; comfortable provision to decrepit age, to orphan infancy, and to accidental malady. I say nothing to the policy of the provision for the poor, in all the variety of faces under which it presents itself. This is the matter of another inquiry. I only just speak of it as of a fact,

taken with others, to support me in my denial, that hitherto any one of the ordinary sources of the increase of mankind is dried up by this war. I affirm, what I can well prove, that the waste has been less than the supply. To say that in war no man must be killed, is to say that there ought to be no war. This they may say, who wish to talk idly, and who would display their humanity at the expense of their honesty, or their understanding. If more lives are lost in this war than necessity requires, they are lost by misconduct, or mistake, but if the hostility be just the error is to be corrected; the war is not to be abandoned.

That the stock of the common people, in numbers, is not lessened, any more than the causes are impaired, is manifest, without being at the pains of an actual numeration. An improved and improving agriculture, which implies a great augmentation of labour, has not yet found itself at a stand, no, not for a single moment, for want of the necessary hands, either in the settled progress of husbandry, or in the occasional pressure of harvests. I have even reason to believe that there has been a much smaller importation, or the demand of it, from a neighbouring kingdom, than in former times, when agriculture was limited in its extent and its means, and when the time was a season of profound peace. On the contrary, the prolific fertility of country life has poured its superfluity of population into the canals, and into other public works, which of late years have been undertaken to so amazing an extent, and which have not only not been discontinued, but, beyond all expectation, pushed on with redoubled vigour, in a war that calls for so many of our men, and so much

of our riches. An increasing capital calls for labour : and an increasing population answers to the call. Our manufactures, augmented both for the supply of foreign and domestic consumption, reproducing, with the means of life, the multitudes which they use and waste, (and which many of them devour much more surely and much more largely than the war,) have always found the laborious hand ready for the liberal pay. That the price of the soldier is highly raised is true. In part this rise may be owing to some measures not so well considered in the beginning of this war ; but the grand cause has been the reluctance of that class of people from whom the soldiery is taken, to enter into a military life, not that but once entered into, it has its conveniences, and even its pleasures. I have seldom known a soldier who, at the intercession of his friends, and at their no small charge, had been redeemed from that discipline, that in a short time was not eager to return to it again. But the true reason is the abundant occupation, and the augmented stipend, found in towns, and villages, and farms, which leaves a smaller number of persons to be disposed of. The price of men for new and untried ways of life must bear a proportion to the profits of that mode of existence from whence they are to be bought.

So far as to the stock of the common people, as it consists in their persons. As to the other part, which consists in their earnings, I have to say, that the rates of wages are very greatly augmented almost through the kingdom. In the parish where I live, it has been raised from seven to nine shillings in the week for the same labourer, performing the same task, and no greater. Except something in the malt

taxes, and the duties upon sugars, I do not know any one tax imposed for very many years past, which affects the labourer in any degree whatsoever; while, on the other hand, the tax upon houses not having more than seven windows (that is, upon cottages) was repealed the very year before the commencement of the present war. On the whole, I am satisfied that the humblest class, and that class which touches the most nearly on the lowest, out of which it is continually emerging, and to which it is continually falling, receives far more from public impositions than it pays. That class receives two millions sterling annually from the classes above it. It pays to no such amount towards any public contribution.

I hope it is not necessary for me to take notice of that language, so ill suited to the persons to whom it has been attributed, and so unbecoming the place in which it is said to have been uttered, concerning the present war as the cause of the high price of provisions during the greater part of the year 1796. I presume it is only to be ascribed to the intolerable license with which the newspapers break not only the rules of decorum, in real life, but even the dramatic decorum, when they personate great men, and, like bad poets, make the heroes of the piece talk more like us Grub-street scribblers, than in a style consonant to persons of gravity and importance in the state. It was easy to demonstrate the cause, and the sole cause, of that rise in the grand article and first necessary of life. It would appear that it had no more connection with the war, than the moderate price to which all sorts of grain were reduced, soon after the return of Lord Malmesbury, had with the state of politics and the fate of his

Lordship's treaty. I have quite as good reason (that is, no reason at all) to attribute this abundance to the longer continuance of the war, as the gentlemen who personate leading members of parliament have had for giving the enhanced price to that war, at a more early period of its duration. Oh, the folly of us poor creatures, who, in the midst of our distresses, or our escapes, are ready to claw or caress one another, upon matters that so seldom depend on our wisdom or our weakness, on our good or evil conduct towards each other!

An untimely shower, or an unseasonable drought; a frost too long continued, or too suddenly broken up, with rain and tempest; the blight of the spring, or the smut of the harvest; will do more to cause the distress of the belly, than all the contrivances of all statesmen can do to relieve it. Let government protect and encourage industry, secure property, repress violence, and discountenance fraud, it is all that they have to do. In other respects, the less they meddle in these affairs the better; the rest is in the hands of our Master and theirs. We are in a constitution of things wherein—" *Modo sol nimius, modo corripit imber.*" But I will push this matter no further. As I have said a good deal upon it at various times during my public service, and have lately written something on it, which may yet see the light, I shall content myself now with observing, that the vigorous and laborious class of life has lately got, from the *bon ton* of the humanity of this day, the name of the "*labouring poor.*" We have heard many plans for the relief of the "*labouring poor.*" This puling jargon is not as innocent as it is foolish. In meddling with great affairs, weakness is never innocuous.

Hitherto the name of poor (in the sense in which it is used to excite compassion) has not been used for those who can, but for those who cannot, labour—for the sick and infirm, for orphan infancy, for languishing and decrepit age; but when we affect to pity, as poor, those who must labour or the world cannot exist, we are trifling with the condition of mankind. It is the common doom of man that he must eat his bread by the sweat of his brow, that is, by the sweat of his body or the sweat of his mind. If this toil was inflicted as a curse, it is as might be expected from the curses of the Father of all blessings—it is tempered with many alleviations, many comforts. Every attempt to fly from it, and to refuse the very terms of our existence, becomes much more truly a curse, and heavier pains and penalties fall upon those who would elude the tasks which are put upon them by the great Master Workman of the world, who in his dealings with his creatures, sympathises with their weakness, and speaking of a creation wrought by mere will out of nothing, speaks of six days of *labour* and one of *rest*. I do not call a healthy young man, cheerful in his mind, and vigorous in his arms, I cannot call such a man, *poor*; I cannot pity my kind as a kind, merely because they are men. This affected pity only tends to dissatisfy them with their condition, and to teach them to seek resources where no resources are to be found, in something else than their own industry, and frugality, and sobriety. Whatever may be the intention (which, because I do not know, I cannot dispute) of those who would discontent mankind by this strange pity, they act towards us, in the consequences, as if they were our worst enemies.

In turning our view from the lower to the higher classes, it will not be necessary for me to show at any length that the stock of the latter, as it consists in their numbers, has not yet suffered any material diminution. I have not seen or heard it asserted: I have no reason to believe it: there is no want of officers, that I have ever understood, for the new ships which we commission, or the new regiments which we raise. In the nature of things it is not with their persons, that the higher classes principally pay their contingent to the demands of war. There is another, and not less important part, which rests with almost exclusive weight upon them. They furnish the means,

“ - - - - - How war may best upheld
Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold,
In all her equipage.”

Not that they are exempt from contributing also by their personal service in the fleets and armies of their country. They do contribute, and in their full and fair proportion, according to the relative proportion of their numbers in the community. They contribute all the mind that actuates the whole machine. The fortitude required of them is very different from the unthinking alacrity of the common soldier, or common sailor, in the face of danger and death; it is not a passion, it is not an impulse, it is not a sentiment; it is a cool, steady, deliberate principle, always present, always equable; having no connection with anger; tempering honour with prudence; incited, invigorated, and sustained, by a generous love of fame; informed, moderated, and directed by an enlarged knowledge of its own great public ends; flowing in one blended stream from the opposite

sources of the heart and the head ; carrying in itself its own commission, and proving its title to every other command, by the first and most difficult command, that of the bosom in which it resides : it is a fortitude, which unites with the courage of the field the more exalted and refined courage of the council ; which knows as well to retreat, as to advance ; which can conquer as well by delay, as by the rapidity of a march, or the impetuosity of an attack ; which can be, with Fabius, the black cloud that lowers on the tops of the mountains, or with Scipio, the thunderbolt of war ; which, undismayed by false shame, can patiently endure the severest trial that a gallant spirit can undergo, in the taunts and provocations of the enemy, the suspicions, the cold respect, and "mouth honour" of those, from whom it should meet a cheerful obedience ; which undisturbed by false humanity, can calmly assume that most awful moral responsibility of deciding, when victory may be too dearly purchased by the loss of a single life, and when the safety and glory of their country may demand the certain sacrifice of thousands. Different stations of command may call for different modifications of this fortitude, but the character ought to be the same in all. And never, in the most "palmy state" of our martial renown, did it shine with brighter lustre, than in the present sanguinary and ferocious hostilities, wherever the British arms have been carried. But, in this most arduous and momentous conflict, which from its nature should have roused us to new and unexampled efforts, I know not how it has been, that we have never put forth half the strength, which we have exerted in ordinary wars. In the fatal battles which have drenched the Conti-

rent with blood, and shaken the system of Europe to pieces, we have never had any considerable army of a magnitude to be compared to the least of those by which, in former times, we so gloriously asserted our place as protectors, not oppressors, at the head of the great commonwealth of Europe. We have never manfully met the danger in front: and when the enemy, resigning to us our natural dominion of the ocean, and abandoning the defence of his distant possessions to the infernal energy of the destroying principles, which he had planted there for the subversion of the neighbouring colonies, drove forth, by one sweeping law of unprecedented despotism, his armed multitudes on every side, to overwhelm the countries and states which had for centuries stood the firm barriers against the ambition of France; we drew back the arm of our military force, which had never been more than half raised to oppose him. From that time we have been combating only with the other arm of our naval power; the right arm of England I admit; but which struck almost unresisted, with blows that could never reach the heart of the hostile mischief. From that time, without a single effort to regain those outworks, which ever till now we so strenuously maintained, as the strong frontier of our own dignity and safety, no less than the liberties of Europe; with but one feeble attempt to succour those brave, faithful, and numerous allies, whom, for the first time since the days of our Edwards and Henrys, we now have in the bosom of France itself; we have been intrenching, and fortifying, and garrisoning ourselves at home: we have been redoubling security on security, to protect ourselves from invasion, which has now first become to us a

serious object of alarm and terror. Alas! the few of us who have protracted life in any measure near to the extreme limits of our short period have been condemned to see strange things; new systems of policy, new principles, and not only new men, but what might appear a new species of men. I believe that any person who was of age to take a part in public affairs forty years ago (if the intermediate space of time were expunged from his memory) would hardly credit his senses, when he should hear from the highest authority, that an army of two hundred thousand men was kept up in this island, and that in the neighbouring island there were at least four-score thousand more. But when he had recovered from his surprise on being told of this army, which has not its parallel, what must be his astonishment to be told again, that this mighty force was kept up for the mere purpose of an inert and passive defence, and that in its far greater part, it was disabled by its constitution and very essence from defending us against an enemy by any one preventive stroke, or any one operation of active hostility? What must his reflections be on learning further, that a fleet of five hundred men of war, the best appointed, and to the full as ably commanded as this country ever had upon the sea, was for the greater part employed in carrying on the same system of unenterprising defence? what must be the sentiments and feelings of one who remembers the former energy of England, when he is given to understand that these two islands, with their extensive and everywhere vulnerable coast, should be considered as a garrisoned sea-town; what would such a man, what would any man think, if the garrison of so strange a fortress

should be such, and so feebly commanded, as never to make a sally; and that, contrary to all which has hitherto been seen in war, an infinitely inferior army, with the shattered relics of an almost annihilated navy, ill found and ill manned, may with safety besiege this superior garrison, and, without hazarding the life of a man, ruin the place, merely by the menaces and false appearances of an attack? Indeed, indeed, my dear friend, I look upon this matter of our defensive system as much the most important of all considerations at this moment. It has oppressed me with many anxious thoughts, which, more than any bodily distemper, have sunk me to the condition in which you know that I am. Should it please Providence to restore to me, even the late weak remains of my strength, I propose to make this matter the subject of a particular discussion. I only mean here to argue, that the mode of conducting the war on our part, be it good or bad, has prevented even the common havoc of war in our population, and especially among that class, whose duty and privilege of superiority it is, to lead the way amidst the perils and slaughter of the field of battle.

The other causes, which sometimes affect the numbers of the lower classes, but which I have shown not to have existed to any such degree during this war—penury, cold, hunger, nakedness—do not easily reach the higher orders of society. I do not dread for them the slightest taste of these calamities from the distress and pressure of the war. They have much more to dread in that way from the confiscations, the rapines, the burnings, and the massacres that may follow in the train of a peace, which shall establish the devastating and depopulating principles

and example of the French regicides in security, and triumph, and dominion. In the ordinary course of human affairs any check to population among men in ease and opulence is less to be apprehended from what they may suffer, than from what they enjoy. Peace is more likely to be injurious to them in that respect than war. The excesses of delicacy, repose, and satiety, are as unfavourable as the extremes of hardship, toil, and want, to the increase and multiplication of our kind. Indeed the abuse of the bounties of nature, much more surely than any partial privation of them, tends to intercept that precious boon of a second and dearer life in our progeny, which was bestowed in the first great command to man from the All-gracious Giver of all, whose name be blessed, whether he gives or takes away. His hand, in every page of his book, has written the lesson of moderation. Our physical well-being, our moral worth, our social happiness, our political tranquillity, all depend on that control of all our appetites and passions, which the ancients designed by the cardinal virtue of *Temperance*.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace*.

THE EMBASSIES TO THE FRENCH REPUBLIC FROM THE DIFFERENT STATES OF EUROPE.—To those who do not love to contemplate the fall of human greatness, I do not know a more mortifying spectacle, than to see the assembled majesty of the crowned heads of Europe waiting as patient suitors in the ante-chamber of regicide. They wait, it seems, until the sanguinary tyrant *Carnot* shall have snorted away the fumes of the indigested blood of his sovereign. Then, when, sunk on the down of usurped pomp, he shall have sufficiently indulged his medita-

tions with what monarch he shall next glut his ravening maw, he may condescend to signify that it is his pleasure to be awake ; and that he is at leisure to receive the proposals of his high and mighty clients for the terms on which he may respite the execution of the sentence he has passed upon them. At the opening of those doors, what a sight it must be to behold the plenipotentiaries of royal impotence, in the precedency which they will intrigue to obtain, and which will be granted to them according to the seniority of their degradation, sneaking into the regicide presence, and, with the relics of the smile, which they had dressed up for the levee of their masters, still flickering on their curled lips, presenting the faded remains of their courtly graces, to meet the scornful, ferocious, sardonic grin of a bloody ruffian, who, whilst he is receiving their homage, is measuring them with his eye, and fitting to their size the slider of his guillotine ! These ambassadors may easily return as good courtiers as they went ; but can they ever return from that degrading residence loyal and faithful subjects ; or with any true affection to their master, or true attachment to the constitution, religion, or laws of their country ? There is great danger that they, who enter smiling into this Triphonian cave, will come out of it sad and serious conspirators ; and such will continue as long as they live. They will become true conductors of contagion to every country which has had the misfortune to send them to the source of that electricity. At best they will become totally indifferent to good and evil, to one institution or another. This species of indifference is but too generally distinguishable in those who have been much employed in foreign courts ;

but in the present case the evil must be aggravated without measure; for they go from their country, not with the pride of the old character, but in a state of the lowest degradation; and what must happen in their place of residence can have no effect in raising them to the level of true dignity, or of chaste self-estimation, either as men, or as representatives of crowned heads.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

EMBASSY FROM TUSCANY TO THE FRENCH REPUBLIC.—Your Lordship will pardon me for this no very long reflection on the short but excellent speech of the plumed director to the ambassador of Capadocia. The imperial ambassador was not in waiting, but they found for Austria a good Judean representation. With great judgment his Highness, the Grand Duke, had sent the most atheistic coxcomb to be found in Florence, to represent, at the bar of impiety, the house of apostolic Majesty, and the descendants of the pious, though high-minded, Maria Theresa. He was sent to humble the whole race of Austria before those grim assassins, reeking with the blood of the daughter of Maria Theresa, whom they sent, half dead, in a dung-cart, to a cruel execution; and this true-born son of apostasy and infidelity, this renegado from the faith, and from all honour and all humanity, drove an Austrian coach over the stones which were yet wet with her blood;—with that blood, which dropped every step through her tumbrel, all the way she was drawn from the horrid prison, in which they had finished all the cruelty and horrors, not executed in the face of the sun! The Hungarian subjects of Maria Theresa, when they drew their swords to defend her rights against France, called her, with correctness of truth, though

not with the same correctness, perhaps, of grammar, a king : *Moriamur pro rege nostro Maria Theresa*.—She lived and died a king, and others will have subjects ready to make the same vow, when, in either sex, they shew themselves real kings.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace*.

RUPTURE OF THE NEGOCIATIONS FOR PEACE.—I thank you for the bundle of state-papers which I received yesterday. I have travelled through the negociation ; and a sad, founderous road it is. There is a sort of standing jest against my countrymen, that one of them on his journey having found a piece of pleasant road, he proposed to his companion to go over it again. This proposal with regard to the worthy traveller's final destination, was certainly a blunder. It was no blunder as to his immediate satisfaction ; for the way was pleasant. In the irksome journey of the regicide negociations it is otherwise : our "paths are not paths of pleasantness, nor our ways the ways to peace." All our mistakes (if such they are), like those of our Hibernian traveller, are mistakes of repetition ; and they will be full as far from bringing us to our place of rest, as his well considered project was from forwarding him to his inn. Yet I see we persevere. Fatigued with our former course, too listless to explore a new one, kept in action by inertness, moving only because we have been in motion, with a sort of plodding perseverance, we resolve to measure back again the very same joyless, hopeless, and inglorious track. Backward and forward ; oscillation not progression ; much going in a scanty space ; the travels of a postilion, miles enough to circle the globe in one short stage ; we have been, and we are yet to be, jolted and rattled

over the loose, misplaced stones, and the treacherous hollows of this rough, ill kept, broken up, treacherous French causeway!

The declaration, which brings up the rear of the papers laid before parliament, contains a review and a reasoned summary of all our attempts, and all our failures; a concise but correct narrative of the painful steps taken to bring on the essay of a treaty at Paris; a clear exposure of all the rebuffs we received in the progress of that experiment; an honest confession of our departure from all the rules and all the principles of political negotiation, and of common prudence, in the conduct of it; and to crown the whole, a fair account of the atrocious manner in which the regicide enemies had broken up what had been so inauspiciously begun and so feebly carried on, by finally, and with all scorn, driving our suppliant ambassador out of the limits of their usurpation.

Even after all that I have lately seen, I was a little surprised at this exposure. A minute display of hopes formed without foundation, and of labours pursued without fruit, is a thing not very flattering to self-estimation. But truth has its rights, and it will assert them. The declaration, after doing all this with a mortifying candour, concludes the whole recapitulation with an engagement still more extraordinary than all the unusual matter it contains. It says, "That His Majesty, who had entered into this negotiation with *good faith*, who has suffered *no impediment* to prevent his prosecuting it with *earnestness and sincerity*, has now *only to lament* its abrupt termination, and to renew *in the face of all Europe the solemn declaration*, that whenever his

enemies shall be *disposed* to enter upon the work of a general pacification in a spirit of conciliation and equity, nothing shall be wanting on his part to contribute to the accomplishment of that great object."

If the disgusting detail of the accumulated insults we have received, in what we have properly called our "solicitation," to a gang of felons and murderers, had been produced as a proof of the utter inefficacy of that mode of proceeding with that description of persons, I should have nothing at all to object to it. It might furnish matter conclusive in argument, and instructive in policy; but with all due submission to high authority, and with all decent deference to superior lights, it does not seem quite clear to a discernment no better than mine, that the premises in that piece conduct irresistibly to the conclusion. A laboured display of the ill consequences which have attended an uniform course of submission to every mode of contumelious insult, with which the despotism of a proud, capricious, insulting, and implacable foe has chosen to buffet our patience, does not appear, to my poor thoughts, to be properly brought forth as a preliminary to justify a resolution of persevering in the very same kind of conduct, towards the very same sort of person, and on the very same principles. We state our experience, and then we come to the manly resolution of acting in contradiction to it. All that has passed at Paris, to the moment of our being shamefully hissed off that stage, has been nothing but a more solemn representation, on the theatre of the nation, of what had been before in rehearsal at Basle. As it is not only confessed by us, but made a matter of charge on the

enemy, that he had given us no encouragement to believe there was a change in his disposition or in his policy at any time subsequent to the period of his rejecting our first overtures, there seems to have been no assignable motive for sending Lord Malmesbury to Paris, except to expose his humbled country to the worst indignities, and the first of the kind, as the declaration very truly observes, that have been known in the world of negotiation.

An honest neighbour of mine is not altogether unhappy in the application of an old common story to a present occasion. It may be said of my friend, what Horace says of a neighbour of his, "*garrit aniles ex re fabellas.*" Conversing on this strange subject, he told me a current story of a simple English country 'squire, who was persuaded by certain *dilettanti* of his acquaintance to see the world and to become knowing in men and manners.

Among other celebrated places, it was recommended to him to visit Constantinople. He took their advice. After various adventures, not to our purpose to dwell upon, he happily arrived at that famous city. As soon as he had a little reposed himself from his fatigue, he took a walk into the streets; but he had not gone far, before a "malignant and a turban'd Turk" had his choler roused by the careless and assured air with which this infidel strutted about in the metropolis of true believers. In this temper he lost no time in doing to our traveller the honours of the place. The Turk crossed over the way, and with perfect good will gave him two or three lusty kicks on the seat of honour. To resent or to return the compliment in Turkey was quite out of the question. Our traveller,

since he could no otherwise acknowledge this kind of favour, received it with the best grace in the world—he made one of his most ceremonious bows, and begged the kicking mussulman “to accept his perfect assurances of high consideration.” Our countryman was too wise to imitate Othello in the use of the dagger. He thought it better, as better it was, to assuage his bruised dignity with half a yard square of balmy diplomatic diachylon. In the disasters of their friends, people are seldom wanting in a laudable patience. When they are such as do not threaten to end fatally, they become even matter of pleasantry. The English fellow-travellers of our sufferer, finding him a little out of spirits, entreated him not to take so slight a business so very seriously. They told him it was the custom of the country; that every country had its customs; that the Turkish manners were a little rough; but that in the main the Turks were a good-natured people; that what would have been a deadly affront anywhere else, was only a little freedom there; in short, they told him to think no more of the matter, and to try his fortune in another *promenade*. But the 'squire, though a little clownish, had some home-bred sense. What! have I come, at all this expense and trouble, all the way to Constantinople only to be kicked? Without going beyond my own stable, my groom, for half-a-crown, would have kicked me to my heart's content. I don't mean to stay in Constantinople eight and forty hours, nor ever to return to this rough, good-natured people, that have their own customs.

In my opinion the 'squire was in the right. He was satisfied with his first ramble and his first injuries. But reason of state and common sense are

two things. If it were not for this difference it might not appear of absolute necessity, after having received a certain quantity of buffetings by advance, that we should send a peer of the realm to the scum of the earth, to collect the debt to the last farthing; and to receive, with infinite aggravation, the same scorns which had been paid to our supplication through a commoner: but it was proper, I suppose, that the whole of our country, in all its orders, should have a share of the indignity; and, as in reason, that the higher orders should touch the larger proportion.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.* 1797.

LAST WORDS OF EDMUND BURKE RELATIVE TO THE WAR WITH FRANCE.—Public affairs occupied much of Mr. Burke's thoughts to the last moment. "Never," said he, "succumb to the enemy; it is a struggle for your existence as a nation; and if you must die, die with the sword in your hand: but I have no fears whatever for the result. There is a salient, living principle of energy in the public mind of England, which only requires proper direction to enable her to withstand this or any other ferocious foe. Persevere therefore, till this tyranny be overpast."—*Prior's Life of Burke.*

CHAPTER V.

IRELAND AND THE CATHOLIC QUESTION.

Now on the rising side of Cromla stood Erin's sad sons : like a grove through which the flame had rushed, hurried on by the winds of the stormy night ; distant, withered, dark they stand, with not a leaf to shake in the vale. . . . He raises at times his terrible voice. Erin, abashed, gathers round. Their souls return back, like a stream. They wonder at the steps of their fear. He rose, like the beam of the morning, on a haunted heath.—*OSSIAN.*

THE PENAL LAWS AGAINST THE CATHOLICS.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE LAWS AGAINST CATHOLICS.
—Those who think themselves good Protestants, from their animosity to others, are in that respect no Protestants at all. It was at first thought necessary, perhaps, to oppose to Popery another Popery, to get the better of it. Whatever was the cause, laws were made in many countries, and in this kingdom in particular, against Papists, which are as bloody as any of those which had been enacted by the popish princes and states ; and where those laws were not bloody, in my opinion they were worse ; as they were slow, cruel outrages on our nature, and kept men alive only to insult in their persons every one of the rights and feelings of humanity. I pass those statutes, because I would spare your pious ears the repetition of such shocking things.—*Speech at Bristol, previous to the Election.* 1780.

EVIL TENDENCY IN IRELAND OF THE PENAL CODE AGAINST CATHOLICS.—The system, which we have

just reviewed and the manner in which religious influence on the public is made to operate upon the laws concerning property in Ireland, is in its nature very singular, and differs, I apprehend, essentially, and perhaps to its disadvantage, from any scheme of religious persecution now existing in any other country in Europe, or which has prevailed in any time, or nation, with which history has made us acquainted. I believe it will not be difficult to shew, that it is unjust, impolitic, and inefficacious; that it has the most unhappy influence on the prosperity, the morals, and the safety of that country; that this influence is not accidental, but has flowed as the necessary and direct consequence of the laws themselves, first on account of the object which they affect, and next by the quality of the greatest part of the instruments they employ.

The happiness or misery of multitudes can never be a thing indifferent. A law against the majority of the people is in substance a law against the people itself; its extent determines its invalidity; it even changes its character as it enlarges its operation: it is not particular injustice, but general oppression; and can no longer be considered as a private hardship, which might be borne, but spreads and grows up into the unfortunate importance of a national calamity.—*Tracts on the Popery laws.*

ERRONEOUS TITLE GIVEN TO THE CATHOLIC PENAL CODE.—Seldom is the title or preamble of the law of the same import with the body and enacting part; but they generally place some other colour uppermost, which differs from that which is afterwards to appear, or at least one that is several shades fainter. Thus the penal laws in question are not called laws

oblige men, baptized and educated in popery, to renounce their religion or their property; but are enacted laws to prevent the growth of popery; as if their purpose was only to prevent conversions to that sect, and not to persecute a million of people already engaged in it. But of all the instances of this sort of legislative artifice, and of the principles that produced it, I never met with any, which made a stronger impression on me, than that of Louis XIV., in the revocation of the edict of Nantz. That monarch had, when he made that revocation, as few measures to keep with public opinion as any man. In the exercise of the most unresisted authority at home, in a career of uninterrupted victory abroad, and in a course of flattery equal to the circumstances of his greatness in both these particulars, he might be supposed to have as little need as disposition to render any sort of account to the world of his procedure towards his subjects. But the persecution of so vast a body of men as the Hugonots was too strong a measure even for the law of pride and power. It was too glaring a contradiction even to those principles, upon which persecution itself is supported. Shocked at the naked attempt, he had recourse, for a palliation of his conduct, to an unkingly denial of the fact, which made against him. In the preamble, therefore, to his act of revocation, he sets forth, that the edict of Nantz was no longer necessary, as the object of it (the protestants of his kingdom) were then reduced to a very small number. The refugees in Holland cried out against this misrepresentation. They asserted, I believe with truth, that this revocation had driven 200,000 of them out of their country; and they could readily demonstrate, there

still remained 600,000 protestants in France. If this were the fact (as it was undoubtedly) no argument of policy could have been strong enough to excuse a measure, by which 800,000 men were despoiled, at one stroke, of so many of their rights and privileges. Louis XIV. confessed, by this sort of apology, that if the number had been large, the revocation had been unjust. But, after all, is it not most evident, that this act of injustice, which let loose on that monarch such a torrent of invective and reproach, and which threw so dark a cloud over all the splendour of a most illustrious reign, falls far short of the case in Ireland? The privileges, which the protestants of that kingdom enjoyed antecedent to this revocation, were far greater than the Roman Catholics of Ireland ever aspired to under a contrary establishment. The number of their sufferers, if considered absolutely, is not half of ours; if considered relatively to the body of each community, it is not perhaps a twentieth part. And then the penalties and incapacities, which grew from that revocation, are not so grievous in their nature, nor so certain in their execution, nor so ruinous by a great deal to the civil prosperity of the state, as those which we have established for a perpetual law in our unhappy country. It cannot be thought to arise from affectation, that I call it so. What other name can be given to a country, which contains so many hundred thousands of human creatures reduced to a state of the most abject servitude?—*Tracts on the Popery laws.*

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION.—First then I observe, that if the principle of their final and beneficial intention be admitted as a just ground for such pro-

ceedings, there never was, in the blamable sense of the word, nor ever can be, such a thing as a religious persecution in the world. Such an intention is pretended by all men; who not only insist, that their religion has the sanction of Heaven, but is likewise, and for that reason, the best and most convenient to human society. All religious persecution, Mr. Bayle well observes, is grounded upon a miserable *petitio principii*. You are wrong, I am right; you must come over to me, or you must suffer. Let me add, that the great inlet, by which a colour for oppression has entered into the world, is by one man's pretending to determine concerning the happiness of another, and by claiming a right to use what means he thinks proper in order to bring him to a sense of it. It is the ordinary and trite sophism of oppression. But there is not yet such a convenient ductility in the human understanding, as to make us capable of being persuaded, that men can possibly mean the ultimate good of the whole society, by rendering miserable for a century together the greater part of it; or that any one has such a reversionary benevolence as seriously to intend the remote good of a late posterity, who can give up the present enjoyment which every honest man must have in the happiness of his contemporaries.—*Tracts on the Popery laws.*

CONDUCT OF THE CATHOLICS DURING THE AMERICAN WAR.—Gentlemen, America—when the English nation seemed to be dangerously, if not irrecoverably, divided; when one, and that the most growing branch, was torn from the parent stock, and ingrafted on the power of France, a great terror fell upon this kingdom. On a sudden we awakened from our dreams of conquest, and saw ourselves threatened

with an immediate invasion ; which we were at that time very ill prepared to resist. You remember the cloud that gloomed over us all. In that hour of our dismay, from the bottom of the hiding-places into which the indiscriminate rigour of our statutes had driven them, came out the body of the Roman Catholics. They appeared before the steps of a tottering throne, with one of the most sober, measured, steady, and dutiful addresses that was ever presented to the crown. It was no holiday ceremony ; no anniversary compliment of parade and show. It was signed by almost every gentleman of that persuasion, of note or property, in England. At such a crisis, nothing but a decided resolution to stand or fall with their country could have dictated such an address ; the direct tendency of which was to cut off all retreat ; and to render them peculiarly obnoxious to an invader of their own communion. The address showed what I long languished to see, that all the subjects of England had cast off all foreign views and connections, and that every man looked for his relief from every grievance, at the hands only of his own natural government.—*Speech at Bristol previous to the Election.*

THE PROTESTANT ASSOCIATION IN 1780.—I find with satisfaction and pride, that not above four or five in this city (and I dare say these misled by some gross misrepresentation) have signed that symbol of delusion and bond of sedition, that libel on the national religion and English character, the Protestant Association. It is, therefore, gentlemen, not by way of cure but of prevention, and lest the arts of wicked men may prevail over the integrity of any one amongst us, that I think it necessary to open to

you the merits of this transaction pretty much at large; and I beg your patience upon it; for, although the reasonings that have been used to depreciate the act are of little force, and though the authority of the men concerned in this ill design is not very imposing; yet the audaciousness of these conspirators against the national honour, and the extensive wickedness of their attempts, have raised persons of little importance to a degree of evil eminence, and imparted a sort of sinister dignity to proceedings that had their origin in only the meanest and blindest malice.—
Speech at Bristol previous to the Election.

CONDUCT OF THE CATHOLICS DURING THE RIOTS OF 1780.—There was a circumstance (justice will not suffer me to pass it over) which, if anything could enforce the reasons I have given, would fully justify the act of relief, and render a repeal, or anything like a repeal, unnatural, impossible. It was the behaviour of the persecuted Roman Catholics under the acts of violence and brutal insolence, which they suffered. I suppose there are not in London less than four or five thousand of that persuasion from my country, who do a great deal of the most laborious work in the metropolis; and they chiefly inhabit those quarters, which were the principal theatre of the fury of the bigotted multitude. They are known to be men of strong arms, and quick feelings, and more remarkable for a determined resolution, than clear ideas, or much foresight. But though provoked by everything that can stir the blood of men, their houses and chapels in flames, and with the most atrocious profanations of everything which they hold sacred before their eyes, not a hand was moved to retaliate, or even to defend. Had a conflict once begun, the

rage of their persecutors would have redoubled. Thus fury increasing by the reverberation of outrages, house being fired for house, and church for chapel, I am convinced that no power under heaven could have prevented a general conflagration; and at this day London would have been a tale. But I am well informed, and the thing speaks it, that their clergy exerted their whole influence to keep their people in such a state of forbearance and quiet, as, when I look back, fills me with astonishment; but not with astonishment only. Their merits on that occasion ought not to be forgotten: nor will they, when Englishmen come to recollect themselves. I am sure it were far more proper to have called them forth, and given them the thanks of both houses of parliament, than to have suffered those worthy clergymen, and excellent citizens, to be hunted into holes and corners, whilst we are making low-minded inquisitions into the number of their people; as if a tolerating principle was never to prevail, unless we were very sure that only a few could possibly take advantage of it. But indeed we are not yet well recovered of our fright. Our reason, I trust, will return with our security; and this unfortunate temper will pass over like a cloud.—*Speech at Bristol previous to the Election.*

PARTY GOVERNMENT AND PROTESTANT ASCENDANCY IN IRELAND.—I am sorry to find, that pride and passion, and that sort of zeal for religion, which never shows any wonderful heat but when it afflicts and mortifies our neighbours, will not let the ruling description perceive that the privilege, for which your clients contend, is very nearly as much for the benefit of those who refuse it as those who ask it. I am not

to examine into the charges that are daily made on the administration of Ireland. I am not qualified to say how much in them is cold truth, and how much rhetorical exaggeration. Allowing some foundation to the complaint, it is to no purpose that these people allege that their government is a job in its administration. I am sure it is a job in its constitution; nor is it possible a scheme of polity, which in total exclusion of the body of the community, confines (with little or no regard to their rank or condition in life) to a certain set of favoured citizens the rights which formerly belonged to the whole, should not, by the operation of the same selfish and narrow principles, teach the persons who administer in that government to prefer their own particular, but well understood, private interest to the false and ill calculated private interest of the monopolizing company they belong to. Eminent characters, to be sure, overrule places and circumstances. I have nothing to say to that virtue which shoots up in full force by the native vigour of the seminal principle, in spite of the adverse soil and climate that it grows in. But speaking of things in their ordinary course, in a country of monopoly there *can* be no patriotism. There may be a party spirit—but public spirit there can be none. As to a spirit of liberty, still less can it exist, or any thing like it. A liberty made up of penalties! a liberty made up of incapacities! a liberty made up of exclusion and proscription, continued for ages, of four-fifths, perhaps, of the inhabitants of all ranks and fortunes! In what does such liberty differ from the description of the most shocking kind of servitude?

But it will be said, in that country some people

are free—why this is the very description of despotism. *Partial freedom is privilege and prerogative, and not liberty.* Liberty, such as deserves the name, is an honest, equitable, diffusive, and impartial principle. It is a great and enlarged virtue, and not a sordid, selfish, and illiberal vice. It is the portion of the mass of the citizens; and not the haughty license of some potent individual, or some predominant faction.

If any thing ought to be despotic in a country, it is its government; because there is no cause of constant operation to make its yoke unequal. But the dominion of a party must continually, steadily, and by its very essence, lean upon the prostrate description. A constitution, formed so as to enable a party to overrule its very government, and to overpower the people too, answers the purposes neither of government nor of freedom. It compels that power which ought, and often would be disposed, *equally* to protect the subjects, to fail in its trust, to counteract its purposes, and to become no better than the instrument of the wrongs of a faction. Some degree of influence must exist in all governments. But a government, which has no interest to please the body of the people, and can neither support them, nor with safety call for their support, nor is of power to sway the domineering faction, can only exist by corruption; and taught by that monopolizing party, which usurps the title and qualities of the public, to consider the body of the people as out of the constitution, they will consider those who are in it in the light in which they choose to consider themselves. The whole relation of government and of freedom will be a battle, or a traffic.

This system, in its real nature, and under its pro-

per appellations, is odious and unnatural, especially when a constitution is admitted, which not only, as all constitutions do profess, has a regard to the good of the multitude, but in its theory makes profession of their power also. But of late this scheme of theirs has been new christened—*honestum nomen imponitur vitio*. A word has been lately struck in the mint of the castle of Dublin; thence it was conveyed to the Tholsel, or city-hall, where, having passed the touch of the corporation, so respectably stamped and vouched, it soon became current in parliament, and was carried by the speaker of the house of commons in great pomp, as an offering of homage from whence it came. The word is *Ascendancy*. It is not absolutely new. But the sense in which I have hitherto seen it used, was to signify an influence obtained over the minds of some other person by love or reverence, or by superior management and dexterity. It had, therefore, to this its promotion no more than a moral, not a civil or political, use. But I admit it is capable of being so applied; and if the lord mayor of Dublin, and the speaker of the Irish parliament, who recommend the preservation of the protestant ascendancy, mean to employ the word in that sense, that is, if they understand by it the preservation of the influence of that description of gentlemen over the catholics by means of an authority derived from their wisdom and virtue, and from an opinion they raise in that people of a pious regard and affection for their freedom and happiness, it is impossible not to commend their adoption of so apt a term into the family of politics. It may be truly said to enrich the language. Even if the lord mayor and speaker mean to insinuate, that this influence is to be obtained and

held by flattering their people, by managing them, by skilfully adapting themselves to the humours and passions of those whom they would govern, he must be a very untoward critic who would cavil even at this use of the word, though such cajoleries would perhaps be more prudently practised than professed. These are all meanings laudable, or at least tolerable. But when we look a little more narrowly, and compare it with the plan, to which it owes its present technical application, I find it has strayed far from its original sense. It goes much further than the privilege allowed by Horace. It is more than *parcè detortum*. This protestant ascendancy means nothing less than an influence obtained by virtue, by love, or even by artifice and seduction; full as little an influence derived from the means by which ministers have obtained an influence, which might be called, without straining, an *ascendancy* in public assemblies in England, that is, by a liberal distribution of places and pensions, and other graces of government. This last is wide indeed of the signification of the word. New *ascendancy* is the old mastership. It is neither more nor less than the resolution of one set of people in Ireland to consider themselves as the sole citizens in the commonwealth; and to keep a dominion over the rest by reducing them to absolute slavery under a military power; and thus fortified in their power, to divide the public estate, which is the result of general contribution, as a military booty solely amongst themselves.'

The poor word ascendancy, so soft and melodious in its sound, so lenitive and emollient in its first usage, is now employed to cover to the world the most rigid, and perhaps not the most wise, of all

plans of policy. The word is large enough in its comprehension. I cannot conceive what mode of oppression in civil life, or what mode of religious persecution, may not come within the methods of preserving an *ascendancy*. In plain old English, as they apply it, it signifies *pride and dominion* on the one part of the relation, and on the other *subserviency and contempt*—and it signifies nothing else. The old words are as fit to be set to music as the new; but use has long since affixed to them their true signification, and they sound, as the other will, harshly and odiously to the moral and intelligent ears of mankind.

This ascendancy, by being a *protestant* ascendancy, does not better it from the combination of a note or two more in this anti-harmonic scale. If protestant ascendancy means the proscription from citizenship of by far the major part of the people of any country, then protestant ascendancy is a bad thing, and it ought to have no existence.—*Letter to Richard Burke, Esq.*

CATHOLICITY AS REGARDS SOCIETY.—But, say the abettors of our penal laws, this old possessed superstition is such in its principles, that society, on its general principles, cannot subsist along with it. Could a man think such an objection possible, if he had not actually heard it made? an objection contradicted not by hypothetical reasonings, but the clear evidence of the most decisive facts. Society not only exists, but flourishes at this hour, with this superstition, in many countries, under every form of government; in some established, in some tolerated; in others upon an equal footing. And was there no civil society at all in these kingdoms before the

Reformation? To say it was not as well constituted, as it ought to be, is saying nothing at all to the purpose; for that assertion evidently regards improvement, not existence. It certainly did then exist; and it as certainly then was at least as much to the advantage of a very great part of society, as what we have brought in the place of it; which is indeed a great blessing to those who have profited of the change; but to all the rest, as we have wrought, that is, by blending general persecution with partial reformation, it is the very reverse. We found the people heretics and idolaters; we have, by way of improving their condition, rendered them slaves and beggars; they remain in all the misfortune of their old errors, and all the superadded misery of their recent punishment. They were happy enough, in their opinion at least, before the change: what benefits society then had, they partook of them all. They are now excluded from those benefits; and so far as civil society comprehends them, and as we have managed the matter, our persecutions are so far from being necessary to its existence, that our very reformation is made in a degree noxious. If this be improvement, truly I know not what can be called a deprivation of society.—*Tracts on the Popery Laws.*

THE NO-POPERY CRY.—You need make no apology for your attachment to the religious description you belong to. It proves (as in you it is sincere) your attachment to the great points, in which the leading divisions are agreed, when the lesser, in which they differ, are so dear to you. I shall never call any religious opinions, which appear important to serious and pious minds, things of no consideration. Nothing is so fatal to religion as

indifference, which is, at least, half infidelity. As long as men hold charity and justice to be essential integral parts of religion, there can be little danger from a strong attachment to particular tenets in faith. This I am perfectly sure is your case; but I am not equally sure, that either zeal for the tenets of faith, or the smallest degree of charity or justice, have much influenced the gentlemen, who, under pretexts of zeal, have resisted the enfranchisement of their country. My dear son, who was a person of discernment, as well as clear and acute in his expressions, said in a letter of his, which I have seen, "that in order to grace their cause, and to draw some respect to their persons, they pretend to be bigots." But here, I take it, we have not much to do with the theological tenets, on the one side of the question or the other. The point itself is practically decided. That religion is owned by the state. Except in a settled maintenance, it is protected. A great deal of the rubbish, which, as a nuisance, long obstructed the way, is removed. One impediment remained longer, as a matter to justify the proscription of the body of our country, after the rest had been abandoned as untenable ground. But the business of the pope (that mixed person of politics and religion) has long ceased to be a bugbear: for some time past he has ceased to be even a colourable pretext. This was well known, when the catholics of these kingdoms, for our amusement, were obliged on oath to disclaim him in his political capacity; which implied an allowance for them to recognise him in some sort of ecclesiastical superiority. It was a compromise of the old dispute.

For my part, I confess, I wish that we had been

less eager in this point. I don't think, indeed, that much mischief would happen from it, if things are otherwise properly managed. Too nice an inquisition ought not to be made into opinions, that are dying away of themselves. Had we lived a hundred and fifty years ago, I should have been as earnest and anxious as anybody for this sort of abjuration; but, living at the time in which I live, and obliged to speculate forward instead of backward, I must fairly say, I could well endure the existence of every sort of collateral aid, which opinion might, in the now state of things, afford to authority. I must see much more danger than in my life I have seen, or than others will venture seriously to affirm that they see, in the Pope aforesaid (though a foreign power, and with his long tail of etceteras,) before I should be active in weakening any hold, which government might think it prudent to resort to, in the management of that large part of the king's subjects. I do not choose to direct all my precautions to the part where the danger does not press; and to leave myself open and unguarded, where I am not only really but visibly attacked.—*Letter to W. Smith, Esq., afterwards one of the Barons of the Court of Exchequer in Ireland.* 1795.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN CANADA.—I voted last session, if a particular vote could be distinguished, in unanimity, for an establishment of the church of England *conjointly* with the establishment which was made some years before by act of parliament, of the Roman Catholic, in the French conquered country of Canada. At the time of making this English ecclesiastical establishment, we did not think it necessary for its safety to destroy the former Gallican

church settlement. In our first act we settled a government altogether monarchical, or nearly so. In that system the Canadian catholics were far from being deprived of the advantages or distinctions, of any kind, which they enjoyed under their former monarchy. It is true that some people, and amongst them one eminent divine, predicted at that time that by this step we should lose our dominions in America. He foretold that the pope would send his indulgences hither; that the Canadians would fall in with France; would declare independence, and draw or force our colonies into the same design. The independence happened according to his prediction, but in directly the reverse order. All our English protestant countries revolted. They joined themselves to France: and it so happened that popish Canada was the only place which preserved its fidelity; the only place in which France got no footing; the only peopled colony which now remains to Great Britain. Vain are all the prognostics taken from ideas and passions, which survive the state of things which gave rise to them. When last year we gave a popular representation to the same Canada, by the choice of the landholders, and an aristocratic representation, at the choice of the crown, neither was the choice of the crown, nor the election of the landholders, limited by a consideration of religion. We had no dread for the protestant church, which we settled there, because we permitted the French catholics, in the utmost latitude of the description, to be free subjects. They are good subjects, I have no doubt; but I will not allow that any French Canadian catholics are better men or better citizens than the Irish of the same communion. Passing from the extremity of the

west to the extremity almost of the east ; I have been many years (now entering into the twelfth) employed in supporting the rights, privileges, laws, and immunities, of a very remote people. I have not as yet been able to finish my task. I have struggled through much discouragement and much opposition, much obloquy, much calumny, for a people with whom I have no tie but the common bond of mankind. In this I have not been left alone. We did not fly from our undertaking because the people are Mahometans or pagans, and that a great majority of the Christians amongst them are papists. Some gentlemen in Ireland, I dare say, have good reasons for what they may do, which do not occur to me. I do not presume to condemn them : but thinking and acting as I have done towards these remote nations, I should not know how to show my face, here or in Ireland, if I should say that all the pagans, all the mussulmen, and even all the papists, (since they must form the highest stage in the climax of evil,) are worthy of a liberal and honourable condition, except those of one of the descriptions, which forms the majority of the inhabitants of the country in which you and I were born. If such are the catholics of Ireland, ill-natured and unjust people, from our own data, may be inclined not to think better of the protestants of the soil, which is supposed to infuse into its sects a kind of venom unknown in other places.—*Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe.* 1792.

PROTECTION OF CATHOLICITY ESSENTIAL TO THE PRESERVATION OF CHRISTENDOM.—All the principal religions in Europe stand upon one common bottom. The support that the whole, or the favoured parts, may have in the secret dispensations of Providence,

it is impossible to tell; but, humanly speaking, they are all *prescriptive* religions. They have all stood long enough to make prescription, and its chain of legitimate prejudices, their main stay. The people who compose the four grand divisions of Christianity have now their religion as an habit, and upon authority, and not on disputation; as all men, who have their religion derived from their parents, and the fruits of education, *must* have it; however the one, more than the other, may be able to reconcile his faith to his own reason, or that of other men. Depend upon it, they must all be supported, or they must all fall in the crash of a common ruin. The catholics are the far more numerous part of the Christians in your country (Ireland); and how can Christianity (that is now the point in issue) be supported under the persecution, or even under the discountenance, of the greater number of Christians? It is a great truth, and which in one of the debates I stated as strongly as I could to the house of commons in the last session, that if the catholic religion is destroyed by the infidels, it is a most contemptible and absurd idea that this, or any protestant church, can survive that event. Therefore my humble and decided opinion is, that all the three religions, prevalent more or less in various parts of these islands, ought all, in subordination to the legal establishments, as they stand in the several countries, to be all countenanced, protected, and cherished; and that in Ireland particularly the Roman Catholic religion should be upheld in high respect and veneration; and should be, in its place, provided with all the means of making it a blessing to the people who profess it; that it ought

to be cherished as a good, and not tolerated as an inevitable evil.—*Letter to W. Smith, Esq.*

THE CATHOLIC CLERGY AND THEIR EDUCATION.—
A Roman Catholic clergyman is the minister of a very ritual religion ; and by his profession subject to many restraints. His life is a life full of strict observances, and his duties are of a laborious nature towards himself, and of the highest possible trust towards others. The duty of confession alone is sufficient to set in the strongest light the necessity of his having an appropriated mode of education. The theological opinions and peculiar rights of one religion never can be properly taught in universities, founded for the purposes and on the principles of another, which in many points are directly opposite. If a Roman Catholic clergyman, intended for celibacy, and the function of confession, is not strictly bred in a seminary where these things are respected, inculcated, and enforced, as sacred, and not made the subject of derision and obloquy, he will be ill fitted for the former, and the latter will be indeed in his hands a terrible instrument.

There is a great resemblance between the whole frame and constitution of the Greek and Latin churches. The secular clergy, in the former, by being married, living under little restraint, and having no particular education suited to their function, are universally fallen into such contempt, that they are never permitted to aspire to the dignities of their own church. It is not held respectable to call them *papas*, their true and ancient appellation, but those who wish to address them with civility always call them *hieromonachi*. In consequence of this dis-

respect, which I venture to say, in such a church, must be the consequence of a secular life, a very great degeneracy from reputable Christian manners has taken place throughout almost the whole of that great member of the Christian Church.

It was so with the Latin church, before the restraint on marriage. Even that restraint gave rise to the greatest disorders before the council of Trent, which, together with the emulation raised, and the good examples given, by the reformed churches, wherever they were in view of each other, has brought on that happy amendment which we see in the Latin communion, both at home and abroad.

The council of Trent has wisely introduced the discipline of seminaries, by which priests are not trusted for a clerical institution, even to the severe discipline of their colleges; but, after they pass through them, are frequently, if not for the greater part, obliged to pass through peculiar methods, having their particular ritual function in view. It is in a great measure to this, and to similar methods used in foreign education, that the Roman catholic clergy of Ireland, miserably provided for, living among low and ill regulated people, without any discipline of sufficient force to secure good manners, have been prevented from becoming an intolerable nuisance to the country, instead of being, as I conceive they generally are, a very great service to it.—*Letter on the Penal Laws against Catholics.*

IRELAND AND ITS GRIEVANCES.

CONDUCT WHICH GREAT BRITAIN SHOULD ADOPT TOWARDS IRELAND.—Is Ireland united to the crown of Great Britain for no other purpose, than that we

should counteract the bounty of Providence in her favour? And in proportion as that bounty has been liberal, that we are to regard it as an evil, which is to be met with in every sort of corrective? To say that Ireland interferes with us, and therefore must be checked is, in my opinion, a very mistaken and a very dangerous principle. I must beg leave to repeat, what I took the liberty of suggesting to you in my last letter, that Ireland is a country, in the same climate, and of the same natural qualities and productions, with this; and has consequently no other means of growing wealthy in herself, or, in other words, of being useful to us, but by doing the very same things which we do, for the same purposes. I hope that in Great Britain we shall always pursue, without exception, *every* means of prosperity; and of course, that Ireland *will* interfere with us in something or other; for either, in order to *limit* her, we *must restrain* ourselves, or we must fall into that shocking conclusion, that we are to keep our yet remaining dependency under a general and indiscriminate restraint, for the mere purpose of oppression. Indeed, Sir, England and Ireland may flourish together. The world is large enough for us both. Let it be our care not to make ourselves too little for it.

I know it is said, that the people of Ireland do not pay the same taxes, and therefore ought not in equity to enjoy the same benefits with this. I had hopes, that the unhappy phantom of a compulsory *equal taxation* had haunted us long enough. I do assure you, that until it is entirely banished from our callinations, (where alone it has, or can have, any ce,) we shall never cease to do ourselves the

most substantial injuries. To that argument of equal taxation, I can only say,—that Ireland pays as many taxes as those, who are the best judges of her powers, are of opinion she can bear. To bear more, she must have more ability; and, in the order of nature, the advantage must *precede* the charge. This disposition of things being the law of God, neither you nor I *can* alter it. So that if you will have more help from Ireland, you must *previously* supply her with more means. I believe it will be found, that if men are suffered freely to cultivate their natural advantages, a virtual equality of contribution will come in its own time, and will flow by an easy descent through its own proper and natural channels. An attempt to disturb that course, and to force nature, will only bring on universal discontent, distress, and confusion.—*Letter to S. Span, Esq.* 1778.

RELIGIOUS DISSENSION IN IRELAND.—No country, I believe, since the world began, has suffered so much on account of religion; or has been so variously harassed both for popery and for protestantism.—*Tracts on the Popery Laws.*

LEGISLATION IN IRELAND.—The legislature of Ireland, like all legislatures, ought to frame its laws to suit the people and the circumstances of the country, and not any longer to make it their whole business to force the nature, the temper, and the inveterate habits of a nation to a conformity to speculative systems concerning any kind of laws.—*Letter to R. Burke, Esq.*

CAUSE OF REBELLIONS IN IRELAND.—It cannot, I confess, be denied, that those miserable performances, which go about under the names of Histories of Ireland, do indeed represent those events after

this manner; and they would persuade us, contrary to the known order of nature, that indulgence and moderation in governors is the natural incitement in subjects to rebel. But there is an interior History of Ireland, the genuine voice of its records and monuments, which speaks a very different language from these histories, from Temple and from Clarendon; these restore nature to its just rights, and policy to its proper order. For they even now shew to those, who have been at the pains to examine them, and they may shew one day to all the world, that these rebellions were not produced by toleration, but by persecution; that they arose not from just and mild government, but from the most unparalleled oppression. These records will be far from giving the least countenance to a doctrine so repugnant to humanity and good sense, as that the security of any establishment, civil or religious, can ever depend upon the misery of those who live under it, or that its danger can arise from their quiet and prosperity. God forbid, that the history of this or any country should give such encouragement to the folly or vices of those who govern. If it can be shewn, that the great rebellions of Ireland have arisen from attempts to reduce the natives to the state, to which they are now reduced, it will shew, that an attempt to continue them in that state will rather be disadvantageous to the public peace, than any kind of security to it. These things have, in some measure, begun to appear already; and as far as regards the argument drawn from former rebellions, it will fall readily to the ground. But, for my part, I think the real danger of every state is, to render its subjects justly discontented; nor is there in politics or

science any more effectual secret for their security, than to establish in their people a firm opinion, that no change can be for their advantage.—*Tracts on the Popery Laws.*

FALSE NOTIONS RESPECTING IRISH INSURRECTION.
 —I suppress all, that is in my mind, about the blindness of those of our clergy, who will shut their eyes to a thing, which glares in such manifest day. If some wretches amongst an indigent and disorderly part of the populace raise a riot about tithes, there are of these gentlemen ready to cry out, that this is an overt act of a treasonable conspiracy. Here the bulls, and the pardons, and the crusade, and the pope, and the thunders of the Vatican, are everywhere at work. There is a plot to bring in a foreign power to destroy the church. Alas! it is not about popes, but about potatoes, that the minds of this unhappy people are agitated. It is not from the spirit of zeal, but the spirit of whiskey, that these wretches act. Is it then not conceived possible, that a poor clown can be unwilling, after paying three pounds rent to a gentleman in a brown coat, to pay fourteen shillings to one in a black coat, for his acre of potatoes, and tumultuously to desire some modification of the charge, without being supposed to have no other motive than a frantic zeal for being thus double-taxed to another set of landholders, and another set of priests? Have men no self-interest? no avarice? no repugnance to public imposts? Have they no sturdy and restive minds? no undisciplined habits? Is there nothing in the whole mob of irregular passions, which might precipitate some of the common people, in some places, to quarrel with a legal, because they feel it to be a burthensome,

imposition? According to these gentlemen, no offence can be committed by papists but from zeal to their religion. To make room for the vices of papists, they clear the house of all the vices of men. Some of the common people (not one, however, in ten thousand) commit disorders. Well! punish them as you do, and as you ought to punish them, for their violence against the just property of each individual clergyman, as each individual suffers. Support the injured rector, or the injured impropiator, in the enjoyment of the estate, of which (whether on the best plan or not) the laws have put him in possession. Let the crime and the punishment stand upon their own bottom. But now we ought all of us, clergymen most particularly, to avoid assigning another cause of quarrel, in order to infuse a new source of bitterness into a dispute, which personal feelings on both sides will of themselves make bitter enough, and thereby involve in it by religious descriptions men, who have individually no share whatsoever in those irregular acts. Let us not make the malignant fictions of our own imaginations, heated with factious controversies, reasons for keeping men, that are neither guilty, nor justly suspected of crime, in a servitude equally dishonourable and unsafe to religion, and to the state. When men are constantly accused, but know themselves not to be guilty, they must naturally abhor their accusers. There is no character, when malignantly taken up and deliberately pursued, which more naturally excites indignation and abhorrence in mankind; especially in that part of mankind which suffers from it.—*Letter to Richard Burke, Esq.*

ADVANTAGE OF A LIBERAL POLICY TOWARDS IRE-

LAND.—It is very unfortunate that we should consider those as rivals, whom we ought to regard as fellow labourers in a common cause. Ireland has never made a single step in its progress towards prosperity, by which you have not had a share, and perhaps the greatest share, in the benefit. That progress has been chiefly owing to her own natural advantages, and her own efforts, which, after a long time, and by slow degrees, have prevailed in some measure over the mischievous systems which they have adopted. Far enough she is still from having arrived even at an ordinary state of perfection; and if our jealousies were to be converted into politics, as systematically as some would have them, the trade of Ireland would vanish out of the system of commerce. But believe me, if Ireland is beneficial to you, it is so not from the parts in which it is restrained, but from those in which it is left free, though not left unrivalled. The greater its freedom, the greater must be your advantage. If you should lose in one way, you will gain in twenty.—*Letter to Messrs. — and Co., Bristol.*

THE EVIL ATTENDING ON THE GOVERNMENT OF THE MINORITY IN IRELAND, AND THE ESSENTIAL ADVANTAGE OF A CLOSE CONNECTION BETWEEN THAT COUNTRY AND ENGLAND.—My health has gone down very rapidly; and I have been brought hither (Bath) with very faint hopes of life, and enfeebled to such a degree, as those, who had known me some time ago, could scarcely think credible. Since I came hither, my sufferings have been greatly aggravated, and my little strength still further reduced; so that, though I am told the symptoms of my disorder begin to carry a more favourable aspect, I pass the far larger part of the twenty-four hours, indeed almost all the

whole, either in my bed, or lying upon the couch, from which I dictate this. Had you been apprised of this circumstance, you could not have expected anything, as you seem to do, from my active exertions. I could do nothing, if I was still stronger, not even "*Si meus adforet Hector.*"

There is no hope for the body of the people of Ireland, as long as those who are in power with you, shall make it the great object of their policy to propagate an opinion on this side of the water, that the mass of their countrymen are not to be trusted by their government: and that the only hold which England has upon Ireland, consists in preserving a certain very small number of gentlemen in full possession of a monopoly of that kingdom. This system has disgusted many others besides catholics and dissenters.

My poor opinion is, that the closest connection between Great Britain and Ireland is essential to the well-being, I had almost said to the very being, of the two kingdoms. For that purpose I humbly conceive, that the whole of the superior, and what I should call *imperial*, politics ought to have its residence here; and that Ireland, locally, civilly, and commercially independent, ought politically to look up to Great Britain in all matters of peace or war; in all those points to be guided by her; and, in a word, with her to live and to die. At bottom, Ireland has no other choice, I mean no other rational choice.

I think, indeed, that Great Britain would be ruined by the separation of Ireland; but, as there are degrees even in ruin, it would fall the most heavily on Ireland. By such a separation Ireland would be the

completely undone country in the world; the wretched, the most distracted, and, in the end, the most desolate part of the habitable globe. Little any people in Ireland consider how much of its prosperity has been owing to, and still depends upon, its intimate connection with this kingdom. But, sensible of this great truth than perhaps any man, I have never conceived, or can conceive, that the connection is strengthened by making the part of the inhabitants of your country believe, that their ease, and their satisfaction, and their equality with the rest of their fellow-subjects of Ireland are things adverse to the principles of that connection; or that their subjection to a small rising junto, composed of one of the smallest of their own internal factions, is the very condition which the harmony of the two kingdoms essentially depends. I was sorry to hear that this principle or something not unlike it, was publicly and avowed by persons of great rank and authority in the house of lords in Ireland.—*Letter on the State of Ireland.* 1797.

CHAPTER VI.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES AND CHARACTERS.

Unbiassed or by favour or by spite ;
 Not dully prepossessed nor blindly right ;
 Though learned, well-bred ; and though well-bred, sincere ;
 Modestly bold, and humanly severe ;
 Who to a friend his faults can freely show,
 And gladly praise the merit of a foe ;
 Blessed with a taste exact yet unconfined ;
 A knowledge both of books and human kind ;
 Generous converse ; a soul exempt from pride ;
 And love to praise, with reason on his side.

POPE.

 THE VENERABLE BEDE.

ANOTHER island of still less importance, in the mouth of the Tees, and called Landisfarne, was about this time sanctified by the austerities of a hermit called Cuthbert. It soon became also a very celebrated monastery. It was, from a dread of the ravages of pirates, removed first to the adjacent part of the continent, and on the same account finally to Durham. The heads of this monastery omitted nothing, which could contribute to the glory of their founder and to the dignity of their house ; which became in a very short time, by their assiduous endeavours, the most considerable school, perhaps, in Europe. The great and justest boast of this monastery is the venerable Beda, who was educated and spent his whole life there. An account of his writings is an account of the English learning in that

age, taken in its most advantageous view. Many of his works remain, and he wrote both in prose and verse, and upon all sorts of subjects. His theology forms the most considerable part of his writings. He wrote comments upon almost the whole Scripture, and several homilies on the principal festivals of the church. Both the comments and sermons are generally allegorical in the construction of the text, and simply moral in the application. In these discourses several things seem strained and fanciful: but herein he followed entirely the manner of the earlier fathers, from whom the greatest part of his divinity is not so much imitated as extracted. The systematic and logical method, which seems to have been first introduced into theology by John of Damascus, and which afterwards was known by the name of school-divinity, was not then in use, at least in the Western church; though soon after it made an amazing progress. In this scheme, the allegorical gave way to the literal explication; the imagination had less scope; and the affections were less touched. But it prevailed by an appearance more solid and philosophical; by an order more scientific; and by a readiness of application, either for the solution or the exciting of doubts and difficulties.

They also cultivated in this monastery the study of natural philosophy and astronomy. There remain of Beda one entire book, and some scattered essays on these subjects. This book, *de Rerum Naturâ*, is concise and methodical, and contains no very contemptible abstract of the physics, which were taught in the decline of the Roman empire. It was somewhat unfortunate, that the infancy of English learning

was supported by the dotage of the Roman, and that even the spring-head from whence they drew their instructions was itself corrupted. However, the works of the great masters of the ancient science still remained; but in natural philosophy the worst was the most fashionable. The Epicurean physics, the most approaching to rational, had long lost all credit by being made the support of an impious theology and a loose morality. The fine-visions of Plato fell into some discredit by the abuse, which heretics had made of them; and the writings of Aristotle seem to have been then the only one much regarded, even in natural philosophy, in which branch of science alone they are unworthy of him. Bede entirely follows his system. The appearances of nature are explained by matter and form, and by the four vulgar elements; acted upon by the four supposed qualities of hot, dry, moist, and cold. His astronomy is on the common system of the ancients; sufficient for the few purposes to which they applied it, but otherwise imperfect and grossly erroneous. He makes the moon larger than the earth; though a reflection on the nature of eclipses, which he understood, might have satisfied him of the contrary. But he had so much to copy, that he had little time to examine. These speculations, however erroneous, were still useful; for though men err in assigning the causes of natural operations, the works of nature are by this means brought under their consideration; which cannot be done without enlarging the mind. The science may be false, or frivolous; the improvement will be real. It may here be remarked, that soon afterwards the monks began to apply themselves to astronomy and chronology from the dis-

putes, which were carried on with so much heat, and so little effect, concerning the proper time of celebrating Easter ; and the English owed the cultivation of these noble sciences to one of the most trivial controversies of ecclesiastic discipline. Beda did not confine his attention to those superior sciences. He treated of music, and of rhetoric, of grammar, and the art of versification, and of arithmetic, both by letters and on the fingers : and his work on this last subject is the only one, in which that piece of antique curiosity has been preserved to us. All these are short pieces ; some of them are in the catechetical method ; and seemed designed for the immediate use of the pupils in his monastery, in order to furnish them with some leading ideas in the rudiments of these arts, then newly introduced into his country. He likewise made, and probably for the same purpose, a very ample and valuable collection of short philosophical, political, and moral maxims from Aristotle, Plato, Seneca, and other sages of heathen antiquity. He made a separate book of shining common-place and remarkable passages, extracted from the works of Cicero ; of whom he was a great admirer ; though he seems to have been not a happy or diligent imitator in his style. From a view of these pieces, we may form an idea of what stock in the science the English at that time possessed ; and what advances they had made. That work of Beda, which is the best known and most esteemed, is the Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation. Disgraced by a want of choice, and frequently by a confused ill disposition of his matter, and blemished with a degree of credulity next to infantine, it is still a valuable, and for the time a surprising,

performance. The book opens with a description of this island, which would not have disgraced a classical author; and he has prefixed to it a chronological abridgment of sacred and profane history, connected from the beginning of the world; which, though not critically adapted to his main design, is of far more intrinsic value, and indeed displays a vast fund of historical erudition. On the whole, though this father of the English learning seems to have been but a genius of the middle class, neither elevated nor subtil, and one who wrote in a low style, simple but not elegant; yet when we reflect upon the time in which he lived, the place in which he spent his whole life, within the walls of a monastery, in so remote and wild a country, it is impossible to refuse him the praise of an incredible industry, and a generous thirst of knowledge. — *Abridgment of English History.*

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR AND LANFRANC.

There is nothing more memorable in history than the actions, fortunes, and character of this great man (William); whether we consider the grandeur of the plans he formed, the courage and wisdom with which they were executed, or the splendour of that success, which, adorning his youth, continued without the smallest reserve to support his age, even to the last moments of his life. He lived above seventy years, and reigned within ten years as long as he lived; sixty over his dukedom, above twenty over England; both of which he acquired or kept by his own magnanimity, with hardly any other title than he derived from his arms; so that he might be reputed, in all respects, as happy as

the highest ambition, the most fully gratified, can make a man. The silent inward satisfactions of domestic happiness he neither had nor sought. He had a body suited to the character of his mind, erect, firm, large, and active; whilst to be active was a praise; a countenance stern, and which became command. Magnificent in his living, reserved in his conversation, grave in his common deportment, but relaxing with a wise facetiousness, he knew how to relieve his mind and preserve his dignity; for he never forfeited by a personal acquaintance that esteem he had acquired by his great actions. Unlearned in books, he formed his understanding by the rigid discipline of a large and complicated experience. He knew men much, and therefore generally trusted them but little; but when he knew any man to be good, he reposed in him an entire confidence, which prevented his prudence from degenerating into a vice. He had vices in his composition, and great ones; but they were vices of a great mind: ambition, the malady of every extensive genius; and avarice, the madness of the wise: one chiefly actuated his youth; the other governed his age. The vices of young and light minds, the joys of wine, and the pleasures of love, never reached his aspiring nature. The general run of men he looked on with contempt, and treated with cruelty when they opposed him. Nor was the rigour of his mind to be softened but with the appearance of extraordinary fortitude in his enemies, which, by a sympathy congenial to his own virtues, always excited his admiration, and insured his mercy. So that there were often seen in this one man, at the same time, the extremes of a savage cruelty, and a

generosity, that does honour to human nature. Religion too seemed to have a great influence on his mind from policy, or from better motives ; but his religion was displayed in the regularity with which he performed its duties, not in the submission he showed to its ministers, which was never more than what good government required. Yet his choice of a counsellor and favourite was, not according to the mode of the time, out of that order, and a choice that does honour to his memory. This was Lanfranc, a man of great learning for the times, and extraordinary piety. He owed his elevation to William ; but, though always inviolably faithful, he never was the tool or flatterer of the power which raised him ; and the greater freedom he showed, the higher he rose in the confidence of his master. By mixing with the concerns of state he did not lose his religion and conscience, or make them the covers or instruments of ambition ; but tempering the fierce policy of a new power by the mild lights of religion, he became a blessing to the country in which he was promoted. The English owed to the virtue of this stranger, and the influence he had on the king, the little remains of liberty they continued to enjoy ; and at last such a degree of his confidence, as in some sort counterbalanced the severities of the former part of his reign.—*Abridgment of English History.*

ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDY, AND WILLIAM RUFUS.

Robert, though in an advanced age at his father's death, was even then more remarkable for those virtues which make us entertain hopes of a young man, than for that steady prudence which is neces-

sary when the short career we are to run will not allow us to make many mistakes. He had indeed a temper suitable to the genius of the time he lived in, and which therefore enabled him to make a considerable figure in the transactions which distinguished that period. He was of a sincere, open, candid nature; passionately fond of glory; ambitious without having any determinate object in view; vehement in his pursuits, but inconstant; much in war, which he understood and loved. But guiding himself both in war and peace solely by the impulses of an unbounded and irregular spirit, he filled the world with an equal admiration and pity of his splendid qualities and great misfortunes.

William was of a character very different. His views were short, his designs few, his genius narrow, and his manners brutal; full of craft, rapacious, without faith, without religion; but circumspect, steady and courageous for his ends, not for glory. These qualities secured to him that fortune which the virtues of Robert deserved. . . .

We have painted this prince (William Rufus) in the colours in which he is drawn by all the writers who lived the nearest to his time. Although the monkish historians, affected with the partiality of their character, and with the sense of recent injuries, expressed themselves with passion concerning him, we have no other guides to follow. Nothing, indeed, in his life appears to vindicate his character; and it makes strongly for his disadvantage, that without any great end of government he contradicted the prejudices of the age in which he lived, the general and common foundation of honour; and thereby made himself obnoxious to that body of men, who

had the sole custody of fame, and could alone transmit his name with glory or disgrace to posterity.—*Abridgment of English History.*

HENRY II.

John was his youngest and favourite child; in him he reposed all his hopes, and consoled himself for the undutifulness of his other sons; but after concluding the treaty with the king of France and Richard, he found, too soon, that John had been as deep as any in the conspiracy. This was his last wound; afflicted by his children in their deaths, and harassed in their lives; mortified as a father and a king; worn down with cares and sorrows, more than with years, he died, cursing his fortune, his children, and the hour of his birth. When he perceived that death approached him, by his own desire he was carried into a church and laid at the altar's foot. Hardly had he expired, when he was stripped, then forsaken by his attendants, and left a long time a naked and unheeded body in an empty church: affording a just consolation for the obscurity of a mean fortune, and an instructive lesson how little an outward greatness, and enjoyments foreign to the mind, contribute towards a solid felicity, in the example of one who was the greatest of kings and the unhappiest of mankind.—*Abridgment of English History.*

RICHARD CŒUR DE LION.

In many respects a striking parallel presents itself between this ancient king of England and Charles XII. of Sweden. They were both inordinately desirous of war, and rather generals than kings. Both were rather fond of glory than ambitious of empire.

Both of them made and deposed sovereigns. They both carried on their wars at a distance from home. They were both made prisoners by a friend and ally. They were both reduced by an adversary inferior in war, but above them in the arts of rule. After spending their lives in remote adventures, each perished at last near home, in enterprises not suited to the splendour of their former exploits. Both died childless ; and both, by the neglect of their affairs, and the severity of their government, gave their subjects provocation and encouragement to revive their freedom. In all these respects the two characters were alike ; but Richard fell as much short of the Swedish hero in temperance, chastity, and equality of mind, as he exceeded him in wit and eloquence. Some of his sayings are the most spirited that we find in that time ; and some of his verses remain, which in a barbarous age might have passed for poetry.—*Abridgment of English History.*

HENRY THE GREAT, KING OF FRANCE.

I have observed the affectation which, for many years past, has prevailed in Paris even to a degree perfectly childish, of idolizing the memory of your Henry the Fourth. If anything could put any one out of humour with that ornament to the kingly character, it would be this overdone style of insidious panegyric. The persons who have worked this engine the most busily are those who have ended their panegyrics in dethroning his successor and descendant ; a man, as good-natured, at the least, as Henry the Fourth ; altogether as fond of his people ; and who has done infinitely more to correct the ancient vices of the state than that great monarch did, or we are sure he

ever meant to do. Well it is for his panegyrists that they have not him to deal with. For Henry of Navarre was a resolute, active, and politic prince. He possessed, indeed, great humanity and mildness; but a humanity and mildness that never stood in the way of his interests. He never sought to be loved without putting himself first in a condition to be feared. He used soft language with determined conduct. He asserted and maintained his authority in the gross, and distributed his acts of concession only in the detail. He spent the income of his prerogative nobly: but he took care not to break in upon the capital; never abandoning for a moment any of the claims which he made under the fundamental laws, nor sparing to shed the blood of those who opposed him, often in the field, sometimes upon the scaffold. Because he knew how to make his virtues respected by the ungrateful, he has merited the praises of those whom, if they had lived in his time, he would have shut up in the Bastille, and brought to punishment along with the regicides whom he hanged after he had famished Paris into a surrender.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

LORD BACON.

Who is there, that upon hearing the name of Lord Bacon, does not instantly recognise everything of genius the most profound, everything of literature the most extensive, everything of discovery the most penetrating, everything of observation on human life the most distinguishing and refined? All these must be instantly recognised, for they are all inseparably associated with the name of Lord Verulam.—*Speech in the Impeachment of Warren Hastings.*

CROMWELL AND HALE.

Cromwell, when he attempted to legalise his power, and to settle his conquered country in a state of order, did not look for dispensers of justice in the instruments of his usurpation. Quite the contrary. He sought out, with great solicitude and selection, and even from the party most opposite to his designs, men of weight and decorum of character; men unstained with the violence of the times, and with hands not fouled with confiscation and sacrilege: for he chose an *Hale* for his chief justice, though he absolutely refused to take his civic oaths, or to make any acknowledgment whatsoever of the legality of his government. Cromwell told this great lawyer, that since he did not approve his title, all he required of him was, to administer, in a manner agreeable to his pure sentiments and unspotted character, that justice without which human society cannot subsist: that it was not his particular government, but civil order itself, which, as a judge, he wished him to support. Cromwell knew how to separate the institutions expedient to his usurpation from the administration of the public justice of his country. For Cromwell was a man in whom ambition had not wholly suppressed, but only suspended, the sentiments of religion, and the love (as far as it could consist with his designs) of fair and honourable reputation. Accordingly, we are indebted to this act of his for the preservation of our laws, which some senseless assertors of the rights of men were then on the point of entirely erasing, as relics of feudality and barbarism. Besides, he gave in the appointment of that man, to that age, and to all

posterity, the most brilliant example of sincere and fervent piety, exact justice, and profound jurisprudence.—*Letter to a Member of the National Assembly.*

MONK AND CHARLES II.

You ask me what I think of the conduct of General Monk. How this affects your case I cannot tell. I doubt whether you possess, in France, any persons of a capacity to serve the French monarchy in the same manner in which Monk served the monarchy of England. The army which Monk commanded had been formed by Cromwell to a perfection of discipline which perhaps has never been exceeded. That army was besides of an excellent composition. The soldiers were men of extraordinary piety after their mode, of the greatest regularity, and even severity of manners; brave in the field, but modest, quiet, and orderly in their quarters; men who abhorred the idea of assassinating their officers or any other persons; and who (they at least who served in this island) were firmly attached to those generals by whom they were well treated and ably commanded. Such an army, once gained, might be depended on. I doubt much, if you could now find a Monk, whether a Monk could find in France such an army.

I certainly agree with you, that in all probability we owe our whole constitution to the restoration of the English monarchy. The state of things from which Monk relieved England, was however by no means, at that time, so deplorable, in any sense, as yours is now, and under the present sway is likely to continue. Cromwell had delivered England from anarchy. His government, though military and despotic, had been regular and orderly. Under the

iron, and under the yoke, the soil yielded its produce. After his death, the evils of anarchy were rather dreaded than felt. Every man was yet safe in his house and in his property. But it must be admitted, that Monk freed this nation from great and just apprehensions both of future anarchy and of probable tyranny in some form or other. The king whom he gave us was indeed the very reverse of your benignant sovereign, who, in reward for his attempt to bestow liberty on his subjects, languishes himself in prison. The person given to us by Monk was a man without any sense of his duty as a prince, without any regard to the dignity of his crown; without any love to his people; dissolute, false, venal, and destitute of any positive good quality whatsoever, except a pleasant temper, and the manners of a gentleman. Yet the restoration of our monarchy, even in the person of such a prince, was everything to us; for without monarchy in England, most certainly we never can enjoy either peace or liberty.—
Letter to a Member of the National Assembly.

GEORGE II.

In times full of doubt and danger to his person and family, George II. maintained the dignity of his crown connected with the liberty of his people, not only unimpaired, but improved, for the space of thirty-three years. He overcame a dangerous rebellion, abetted by foreign force, and raging in the heart of his kingdom; and thereby destroyed the seeds of all future rebellion that could arise upon the same principle. He carried the glory, the power, the commerce of England, to a height unknown even to this renowned nation in the times of its greatest

prosperity : and he left his succession resting on the true and only true foundations of all national and all regal greatness ; affection at home, reputation abroad, trust in allies, terror in rival nations. The most ardent lover of his country cannot wish for Great Britain a happier fate than to continue as she was then left. A people, emulous as we are in affection to our present sovereign, know not how to form a prayer to heaven for a greater blessing upon his virtues, or a higher state of felicity and glory, than that he should live, and should reign, and, when Providence ordains it, should die, exactly like his illustrious predecessor.—*Thoughts on the Cause of the present Discontents.* 1770.

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

Mr. Walpole (afterwards Sir Robert) was one of the managers on this occasion. He was an honourable man and a sound Whig. He was not, as the Jacobites and discontented Whigs of his time have represented him, and as ill-informed people still represent him, a prodigal and corrupt minister. They charged him, in their libels and seditious conversations, with having first reduced corruption to a system. Such was their cant. But he was far from governing by corruption. He governed by party attachments. The charge of systematic corruption is less applicable to him, perhaps, than to any minister who ever served the crown for so great a length of time. He gained over very few from the opposition. Without being a genius of the first class, he was an intelligent, prudent, and safe minister. He loved peace ; and he helped to communicate the same disposition to nations at least as warlike and restless as that in which

he had the chief direction of affairs. Though he served a master who was fond of martial fame, he kept all the establishments very low. The land-tax continued at two shillings in the pound for the greater part of his administration. The other impositions were moderate. The profound repose, the equal liberty, the firm protection of just laws during the long period of his power, were the principal causes of that prosperity which afterwards took such rapid strides towards perfection; and which furnished to this nation ability to acquire the military glory which it has since obtained, as well as to bear the burthens, the cause and consequence of that warlike reputation. With many virtues, public and private, he had his faults; but his faults were superficial. A careless, coarse, and over-familiar style of discourse, without sufficient regard to persons or occasions, and an almost total want of political decorum, were the errors by which he was most hurt in the public opinion; and those through which his enemies obtained the greatest advantage over him. But justice must be done. The prudence, steadiness, and vigilance of that man, joined to the greatest possible lenity in his character and his politics, preserved the crown to this royal family; and, with it, their laws and liberties to this country.—*Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs.*

When I was very young, a general fashion told me I was to admire some of the writings against that minister (Walpole); a little more maturity taught me as much to despise them. I observed one fault in his general proceeding. He never manfully put forward the entire strength of his cause. He temporised, he managed, and, adopting very nearly the sentiments

of his adversaries, he opposed their inferences. This, for a political commander, is the choice of a weak post. His adversaries had the better of the argument, as he handled it, not as the reason and justice of his cause enabled him to manage it. I say this, after having seen, and with some care examined, the original documents concerning certain important transactions of those times.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU.

The Assembly proceeds on maxims the very reverse of these. The Assembly recommends to its youth a study of the bold experimenters in morality. Everybody knows that there is a great dispute, amongst their leaders, which of them is the best resemblance of Rousseau. In truth, they all resemble him. His blood they transfuse into their minds and into their manners. Him they study; him they meditate; him they turn over in all the time they can spare from the laborious mischief of the day, or the debauches of the night. Rousseau is their canon of holy writ; in his life he is their canon of *Polycletus*; he is their standard figure of perfection. To this man and this writer, as a pattern to authors and to Frenchmen, the foundries of Paris are now running for statues, with the kettles of their poor and the bells of their churches. If an author had written like a great genius on geometry, though its practical and speculative morals were vicious in the extreme, it might appear, that in voting the statue, they honoured only the geometrician. But Rousseau is a moralist, or he is nothing. It is impossible, therefore, putting the circumstances together, to mistake their design in choosing the

author, with whom they have begun to recommend a course of studies.

Their great problem is to find a substitute for all the principles which hitherto have been employed to regulate the human will and action. They find dispositions in the mind of such force and quality as may fit men, far better than the old morality, for the purposes of such a state as theirs, and may go much further in supporting their power, and destroying their enemies. They have therefore chosen a selfish, flattering, seductive, ostentatious vice, in the place of plain duty. True humility, the basis of the Christian system, is the low, but deep and firm, foundation of all real virtue. But this, as very painful in the practice, and little imposing in the appearance, they have totally discarded. Their object is to merge all natural and all social sentiment in inordinate vanity. In a small degree, and conversant in little things, vanity is of little moment. When full grown, it is the worst of vices, and the occasional mimic of them all. It makes the whole man false. It leaves nothing sincere or trustworthy about him. His best qualities are poisoned and perverted by it, and operate exactly as the worst. When your lords had many writers as immoral as the object of their statue (such as Voltaire and others) they chose Rousseau; because in him that peculiar vice, which they wished to erect into ruling virtue, was by far the most conspicuous.

We have had the great professor and founder of *the philosophy of vanity* in England. As I had good opportunities of knowing his proceedings almost from day to day, he left no doubt on my mind that he entertained no principle either to influence his heart,

or to guide his understanding, but *vanity*. With this vice he was possessed to a degree little short of madness. It is from the same deranged, eccentric vanity, that this, the insane *Socrates* of the National Assembly, was impelled to publish a mad confession of his mad faults, and to attempt a new sort of glory from bringing hardily to light the obscure and vulgar vices, which we know may sometimes be blended with eminent talents. He has not observed on the nature of vanity who does not know that it is omnivorous; that it has no choice in its food; that it is fond to talk even of its own faults and vices, as what will excite surprise and draw attention, and what will pass at worst for openness and candour.

It was this abuse and perversion, which vanity makes even of hypocrisy, that has driven Rousseau to record a life not so much as chequered, or spotted here and there, with virtues, or even distinguished by a single good action. It is such a life he chooses to offer to the attention of mankind. It is such a life that, with a wild defiance, he flings in the face of his Creator, whom he acknowledges only to brave. Your Assembly, knowing how much more powerful example is found than precept, has chosen this man (by his own account without a single virtue) for a model. To him they erect their first statue. From him they commence their series of honours and distinctions.

It is that new invented virtue, which your masters canonise, that led their moral hero constantly to exhaust the stores of his powerful rhetoric in the expression of universal benevolence; whilst his heart was incapable of harbouring one spark of common parental affection. Benevolence to the whole species,

and want of feeling for every individual with whom the professors come in contact, form the character of the new philosophy. Setting up for an unsocial independence, this their hero of vanity refuses the just price of common labour, as well as the tribute which opulence owes to genius, and which, when paid, honours the giver and the receiver: and then he pleads his beggary as an excuse for his crimes. He melts with tenderness for those only who touch him by the remotest relation, and then, without one natural pang, casts away, as a sort of offal and excrement, the spawn of his disgustful amours, and sends his children to the hospital of foundlings. The bear loves, licks, and forms her young; but bears are not philosophers. Vanity, however, finds its account in reversing the train of our natural feelings. Thousands admire the sentimental writer; the affectionate father is hardly known in his parish.

Under this philosophic instructor in the *ethics of vanity*, they have attempted in France a regeneration of the moral constitution of man. Statesmen, like your present rulers, exist by everything which is spurious, fictitious, and false; by everything which takes the man from his house, and sets him on a stage; which makes him up an artificial creature, with painted, theatric sentiments, fit to be seen by the glare of candlelight, and formed to be contemplated at a due distance. Vanity is too apt to prevail in all of us, and in all countries. To the improvement of Frenchmen it seems not absolutely necessary that it should be taught upon system. But it is plain that the present rebellion was its legitimate offspring, and it is piously fed by that rebellion with a daily dole.

If the system of institution recommended by the assembly be false and theatric, it is because their system of government is of the same character. To that, and to that alone, it is strictly conformable. To understand either, we must connect the morals with the politics of the legislators. Your practical philosophers, systematic in everything, have wisely begun at the source. As the relation between parents and children is the first amongst the elements of vulgar, natural morality; * they erect statues to a wild, ferocious, low-minded, hard-hearted father, of fine general feelings; a lover of his kind, but a hater of his kindred. Your masters reject the duties of his vulgar relation, as contrary to liberty; as not founded in the social compact; and not binding according to the rights of men; because the relation is not, of course, the result of *free election*; never so on the side of the children, not always on the part of the parents.

The next relation which they regenerate by their statues to Rousseau is that which is next in sanctity to that of a father. They differ from those old-fashioned thinkers, who considered pedagogues as sober and venerable characters, and allied to the parental. The moralists of the dark times, *preceptorem sancti volvere parentis esse loco*. In this age of light, they teach the people that preceptors ought to be in the place of gallants. They systematically corrupt a very corruptible race (for some time

* *Filiola tua te delectari lætor et probari tibi φυσικην esse την προς τα τέκνα*: etenim, si hæc non est, nulla potest homini esse ad hominem naturæ adjunctio: qua sublata vitæ societas tollitur. Valet Patron (Rousseau) et tui condiscipuli. (L'Assemblée Nationale.)—Cic. Ep. ad Atticum.

a growing nuisance amongst you), a set of pert, petulant literators, to whom instead of their proper, but severe, unostentatious duties, they assign the brilliant part of men of wit and pleasure, of gay, young, military sparks, and dangles at toilets. They call on the rising generation in France to take a sympathy in the adventures and fortunes, and they endeavour to engage their sensibility on the side of pedagogues, who betray the most awful family trusts, and vitiate their female pupils. They teach the people that the debauchers of virgins, almost in the arms of their parents, may be safe inmates in the houses, and even fit guardians of the honour of those husbands who succeed legally to the office which the young literators had pre-occupied, without asking leave of law or conscience.

Thus they dispose of all the family relations of parents and children, husbands and wives. Through this same instructor, by whom they corrupt the morals, they corrupt the taste. Taste and elegance, though they are reckoned only among the smaller and secondary morals, yet are of no mean importance in the regulation of life. A moral taste is not of force to turn vice into virtue; but it recommends virtue with something like the blandishments of pleasure; and it infinitely abates the evils of vice. Rousseau, a writer of great force and vivacity, is totally destitute of taste, in any sense of the word. Your masters, who are his scholars, conceive that all refinement has an aristocratic character. The last age had exhausted all its powers in giving a grace and nobleness to our mutual appetites, and in raising them into a higher class and order than seemed justly to belong to them. Through Rousseau, your masters

are resolved to destroy these aristocratic prejudices. The passion called love has so general and powerful an influence; it makes so much of the entertainment, and indeed so much of the occupation of that part of life which decides the character for ever, that the mode and the principles on which it engages the sympathy, and strikes the imagination, become of the utmost importance to the morals and manners of every society. Your rulers were well aware of this; and in their system of changing your manners to accommodate them to their politics, they found nothing so convenient as Rousseau. Through him they teach men to love after the fashion of philosophers; that is, they teach to men, to Frenchmen, a love without gallantry; a love without anything of that fine flower of youthfulness and gentility, which places it, if not among the virtues, among the ornaments of life. Instead of this passion, naturally allied to grace and manners, they infuse into their youth an unfashioned, indelicate, sour, gloomy, ferocious medley of pedantry and lewdness; of metaphysical speculations blended with the coarsest sensuality. Such is the general morality of the passions to be found in their famous philosopher, in his famous work of philosophic gallantry the *Nouvelle Héloïse*.

When the fence from the gallantry of preceptors is broken down, and your families are no longer protected by decent pride, and salutary domestic prejudice, there is but one step to a frightful corruption. The rulers in the National Assembly are in good hopes that the females of the first families in France may become an easy prey to dancing-masters, fiddlers, pattern-drawers, friseurs, and valets-de-chambre, and other active citizens of that description, who having

the entry into your houses, and being half domesticated by their situation, may be blended with you by regular and irregular relations. By a law they have made these people their equals. By adopting the sentiments of Rousseau they have made them your rivals. In this manner these great legislators complete their plan of levelling, and establish their rights of men on a sure foundation.

I am certain that the writings of Rousseau lead directly to this kind of shameful evil. I have often wondered how he comes to be so much more admired and followed on the continent than he is here. Perhaps a secret charm in the language may have its share in this extraordinary difference. We certainly perceive, and to a degree we feel, in this writer, a style glowing, animated, enthusiastic; at the same time that we find it lax, diffuse, and not in the best taste of composition; all the members of the piece being pretty equally laboured and expanded, without any due selection or subordination of parts. He is generally too much on the stretch, and his manner has little variety. We cannot rest upon any of his works, though they contain observations which occasionally discover a considerable insight into human nature. But his doctrines, on the whole, are so inapplicable to real life and manners, that we never dream of drawing from them any rule for laws or conduct, or for fortifying or illustrating anything by a reference to his opinions. They have with us the fate of older paradoxes,

Cum ventum ad *verum* est *sensus* *moresque* repugnant,
Atque ipsa utilitas justı prope mater et æqui.

Perhaps bold speculations are more acceptable be-

cause more new to you than to us, who have been long since satiated with them. We continue, as in the two last ages, to read, more generally than I believe is now done on the continent, the authors of sound antiquity. These occupy our minds. They give us another taste and turn; and will not suffer us to be more than transiently amused with paradoxical morality. It is not that I consider this writer as wholly destitute of just notions. Amongst his irregularities, it must be reckoned that he is sometimes moral, and moral in a very sublime strain. But the *general spirit and tendency* of his works is mischievous; and the more mischievous for this mixture: for perfect depravity of sentiment is not reconcilable with eloquence; and the mind (though corruptible, not complectionally vicious) would reject, and throw off with disgust, a lesson of pure and unmixed evil. These writers make even virtue a pander to vice.

However, I less consider the author than the system of the Assembly in perverting morality through his means. This I confess makes me nearly despair of any attempt upon the minds of their followers, through reason, honour, or conscience. The great object of your tyrants is to destroy the gentlemen of France; and for that purpose they destroy, to the best of their power, all the effect of those relations which may render considerable men powerful or even safe. To destroy that order, they vitiate the whole community. That no means may exist of confederating against their tyranny, by the false sympathies of this *Nouvelle Héloïse*, they endeavour to subvert those principles of domestic trust and fidelity, which form the discipline

cial life. They propagate principles by which servant may think it, if not his duty, at least privilege, to betray his master. By these principles, every considerable father of a family loses the glory of his house. *Debet sua cuique domus refugium tutissimum*, says the law, which your ancestors have taken so much pains, first to decry, to repeal. They destroy all the tranquillity and security of domestic life; turning the asylum of the house into a gloomy prison, where the father of a family must drag out a miserable existence, aggravated in proportion to the apparent means of plenty; where he is worse than solitary in a crowd of domestics, and more apprehensive from his servants' clamours, than from the hired, blood-thirsty mob without doors, who are ready to pull him to the wall.—*Letter to a Member of the National Assembly.*

LOUIS XVI.

But the reverend pastor exults in this "leading triumph," because truly Louis the Sixteenth was an arbitrary monarch;" that is, in other words, no more nor less than because he was Louis the Sixteenth, and because he had the misfortune of being born King of France, with the prerogatives of such a monarch, a long line of ancestors, and a long acquaintance of the people, without any act of his, to put him in possession. A misfortune it has not turned out to him, that he was born king of France. But misfortune is not crime, nor is indistinctness always the greatest guilt. I shall never think that a prince, the acts of whose whole reign consist of a series of concessions to his subjects, who was obliged to relax his authority, to remit his preroga-

tives, to call his people to a share of freedom, not known, perhaps not desired, by their ancestors; such a prince, though he should be subjected to the common frailties attached to men and to princes, though he should have once thought it necessary to provide force against the desperate designs manifestly carrying on against his person, and the remnants of his authority; though all this should be taken into consideration, I shall be led with great difficulty to think he deserves the cruel and insulting triumph of Paris, and of Dr. Price.

The unhappy Louis XVI. was a man of the best intentions that probably ever reigned. He was by no means deficient in talents. He had a most laudable desire to supply by general reading, and even by the acquisition of elemental knowledge, an education in all points originally defective; but nobody told him (and it was no wonder he should not himself divine it), that the world of which he read, and the world in which he lived, were no longer the same. Desirous of doing everything for the best, fearful of cabal, distrusting his own judgment, he sought his ministers of all kinds upon public testimony. But as courts are the field for caballers, the public is the theatre for mountebanks and impostors. The cure for both those evils is in the discernment of the prince. But an accurate and penetrating discernment is what in a young prince could not be looked for.

His conduct in its principle was not unwise; but like most other of his well-meant designs, it failed in his hands. It failed partly from mere ill fortune, to which speculators are rarely pleased to assign that very large share to which she is justly entitled in

human affairs. The failure, perhaps, in part, was owing to his suffering his system to be vitiated and disturbed by those intrigues which it is, humanly speaking, impossible wholly to prevent in courts, or indeed under any form of government. However, with these aberrations, he gave himself over to a succession of the statesmen of public opinion. In other things he thought that he might be a king on the terms of his predecessors. He was conscious of the purity of his heart and the general good tendency of his government. He flattered himself, as most men in his situation will, that he might consult his ease without danger to his safety. It is not at all wonderful that both he and his ministers, giving way abundantly in other respects to innovation, should take up in policy with the tradition of their monarchy. Under his ancestors the monarchy had subsisted, and even been strengthened, by the generation or support of republics. First, the Swiss republics grew under the guardianship of the French monarchy. The Dutch republics were hatched and cherished under the same incubation. Afterwards, a republican constitution was, under the influence of France, established in the empire against the pretensions of its chief. Even whilst the monarchy of France, by a series of wars and negotiations, and lastly by the treaties of Westphalia, had obtained the establishment of the protestants in Germany as a law of the empire, the same monarchy, under Louis XIII., had force enough to destroy the republican system of the protestants at home.

Louis XVI. was a diligent reader of history. But the very lamp of prudence blinded him. The guide of human life led him astray. A silent revolution in

the moral world preceded the political, and prepared it. It became of more importance than ever what examples were given, and what measures were adopted. Their causes no longer lurked in the recesses of cabinets, or in the private conspiracies of the factious. They were no longer to be controlled by the force and influence of the grandees, who formerly had been able to stir up troubles by their discontents, and to quiet them by their corruption. The chain of subordination, even in cabal and sedition, was broken in its most important links. It was no longer the great and the populace. Other interests were formed, other dependencies, other connections, other communications. The middle classes had swelled far beyond their former proportion. Like whatever is the most effectively rich and great in society, these classes became the seat of all the active politics, and the preponderating weight to decide on them. There were all the energies by which fortune is acquired; there the consequence of their success. There were all the talents which assert their pretensions, and are impatient of the place which settled society prescribes to them. These descriptions had got between the great and the populace; and the influence on the lower classes was with them. The spirit of ambition had taken possession of this class as violent as ever it had done of any other. They felt the importance of this situation. The correspondence of the moneyed and the mercantile world, the literary intercourse of academies, but, above all, the press, of which they had in a manner entire possession, made a kind of electric communication everywhere. The press, in reality, has made every government, in its spirit, almost democratic. Without it the great, the first

movements in this Revolution could not, perhaps, have been given. But the spirit of ambition, now for the first time connected with the spirit of speculation, was not to be restrained at will. There was no longer any means of arresting a principle in its course. When Louis XVI., under the influence of his enemies to monarchy, meant to found but one republic, he set up two. When he meant to take away half the crown of his neighbour, he lost the whole of his own. Louis XVI. could not with impunity countenance a new republic: yet between his throne and that dangerous lodgement for an enemy, which he had erected, he had the whole Atlantic for a ditch. He had for an out-work the English nation itself, friendly to liberty, adverse to that mode of it. He was surrounded by a rampart of monarchies, most of them allied to him, and generally under his influence. Yet even thus secured, a republic erected under his auspices, and dependent on his power, became fatal to his throne. The very money which he had lent to support this republic, by a good faith, which to him operated as perfidy, was punctually paid to his enemies, and became a resource in the hands of his assassins.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

MARIA ANTOINETTE, QUEEN OF FRANCE.

In that, or nearly in that state of things and of opinions, came the Austrian match; which promised to draw the knot, as afterwards in effect it did, still more closely between the old rival houses. This added exceedingly to their hatred and contempt of their monarchy. It was for this reason that the late glorious queen, who on all accounts was formed to

produce general love and admiration, and whose life was as mild and beneficent as her death was beyond example great and heroic, became so very soon and so very much the object of an implacable rancour, never to be extinguished but in her blood. When I wrote my letter in answer to M. de Menonville, in the beginning of January 1791, I had good reason for thinking that this description of revolutionists did not so early nor so steadily point their murderous designs at the martyr king as at the royal heroine. It was accident, and the momentary depression of that part of the faction, that gave to the husband the happy priority in death.*—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

HOWARD, THE PHILANTHROPIST.

I cannot name this gentleman without remarking that his labours and writings have done much to open the eyes and hearts of mankind. He has visited all Europe, not to survey the sumptuousness of palaces, or the stateliness of temples; not to make accurate measurements of the remains of ancient grandeur, nor to form a scale of the curiosity of modern art; not to collect medals, or collate manuscripts: but to dive into the depths of dungeons; to plunge into the infection of hospitals; to survey the mansions of sorrow and pain; to take the gauge and dimensions of misery, depression, and contempt; to remember the forgotten, to attend to the neglected, to visit the forsaken, and to compare and collate the distresses of all men in all countries. His plan is original; and it is as full of genius as it is of humanity. It was a voyage of discovery; a circumnavigation of charity. Already the benefit of his labour is felt

* See also at p. 148.

more or less in every country ; I hope he will anticipate his final reward, by seeing all its effects fully realised in his own. He will receive, not by detail but in gross, the reward of those who visit the prisoner ; and he has so forestalled and monopolised this branch of charity, that there will be, I trust, little room to merit by such acts of benevolence hereafter.—*Speech at Bristol previous to the Election.*

LORD CHATHAM AND CHARLES TOWNSHEND.

Another scene was opened, and other actors appeared on the stage. The state, in the condition I have described it, was delivered into the hands of Lord Chatham, a great and celebrated name ; a name that keeps the name of this country respectable in every other on the globe. It may be truly called,

Clarum et venerabile nomen
Gentibus, et multum nostræ quod proderat urbi.

Sir, the venerable age of this great man, his merited rank, his superior eloquence, his splendid qualities, his eminent services, the vast space he fills in the eye of mankind ; and, more than all the rest, his fall from power, which, like death, canonizes and sanctifies a great character, will not suffer me to censure any part of his conduct. I am afraid to flatter him ; I am sure I am not disposed to blame him. Let those, who have betrayed him by their adulation, insult him with their malevolence. But what I do not presume to censure, I may have leave to lament. For a wise man, he seemed to me at that time to be governed too much by general maxims. I speak with the freedom of history, and I hope without offence. One or two of these maxims, flowing from an opinion not the most indulgent to our

unhappy species, and surely a little too general, led him into measures that were greatly mischievous to himself; and for that reason, among others, perhaps fatal to his country; measures, the effects of which, I am afraid, are for ever incurable. He made an administration, so chequered and speckled; he put together a piece of joinery, so crossly indented and whimsically dove-tailed; a cabinet so variously inlaid; such a piece of diversified mosaic; such a tessellated pavement without cement; here a bit of black stone, and there a bit of white; patriots and courtiers, king's friends and republicans; whigs and tories; treacherous friends and open enemies; that it was indeed a very curious show; but utterly unsafe to touch, and unsure to stand on. The colleagues whom he had assorted at the same boards, stared at each other, and were obliged to ask, "Sir, your name? Sir, you have the advantage of me; Mr. Such-a-one, I beg a thousand pardons;" I venture to say, it did so happen, that persons had a single office divided between them, who had never spoke to each other in their lives; until they found themselves, they knew not how, pigging together, heads and points, in the same truckle-bed.*

Sir, in consequence of this arrangement, having put so much the larger part of his enemies and opposers into power, the confusion was such, that his own principles could not possibly have any effect or influence in the conduct of affairs. If ever he fell into a fit of the gout, or if any other cause withdrew him from public cares, principles directly the con-

* Supposed to allude to the Right Honourable Lord North, and George Cooke, Esq., who were made joint paymasters in the summer of 1766, on the removal of the Rockingham administration.

were sure to predominate. When he had
 ed his plan, he had not an inch of ground to
 upon. When he had accomplished his scheme
 nistration, he was no longer a minister.

en his face was hid but for a moment, his
 system was on a wide sea, without chart or
 ss. The gentlemen, his particular friends, who,
 he names of various departments of ministry,
 dmitted to seem as if they acted a part under
 rith a modesty that becomes all men, and with
 idence in him, which was justified even in its
 agance by his superior abilities, had never, in
 stance, presumed upon any opinion of their

Deprived of his guiding influence, they were
 d about, the sport of every gust, and easily
 into any port; and as those who joined with
 in manning the vessel were the most directly
 te to his opinions, measures, and character,
 r the most artful and most powerful of the set,
 asily prevailed, so as to seize upon the vacant,
 upied, and derelict minds of his friends; and
 tly they turned the vessel wholly out of the
 of his policy. As if it were to insult as well
 betray him, even long before the close of the
 session of his administration, when everything
 ublicly transacted, and with great parade, in
 me, they made an act, declaring it highly just
 xpedient to raise a revenue in America. For
 then, sir, even before this splendid orb was
 ly set, and while the western horizon was in a
 with his descending glory, on the opposite
 r of the heavens arose another luminary, and,
 s hour, became lord of the ascendant.

s light too is passed and set for ever. You

understand, to be sure, that I speak of Charles Townshend, officially the re-producer of this fatal scheme ; whom I cannot even now remember without some degree of sensibility. In truth, sir, he was the delight and ornament of this house, and the charm of every private society which he honoured with his presence. Perhaps there never arose in this country, nor in any country, a man of a more pointed and finished wit ; and (where his passions were not concerned) of a more refined, exquisite, and penetrating judgment. If he had not so great a stock, as some have had who flourished formerly, of knowledge long treasured up, he knew better by far, than any man I ever was acquainted with, how to bring together within a short time, all that was necessary to establish, to illustrate, and to decorate that side of the question he supported. He stated his matter skillfully and powerfully. He particularly excelled in a most luminous explanation, and display of his subject. His style of argument was neither trite and vulgar, nor subtle and abstruse. He hit the house just between wind and water. And not being troubled with too anxious a zeal for any matter in question, he was never more tedious, or more earnest, than the pre-conceived opinions and present temper of his hearers required ; to whom he was always in perfect unison. He conformed exactly to the temper of the house ; and he seemed to guide, because he was always sure to follow it.

I beg pardon, sir, if when I speak of this and of other great men, I appear to digress in saying something of their characters. In this eventful history of the revolutions of America, the characters of such men are of much importance. Great men are the

guide-posts and land-marks in the state. The credit of such men at court, or in the nation, is the sole cause of all the public measures. It would be an invidious thing (most foreign, I trust, to what you think my disposition) to remark the errors into which the authority of great names has brought the nation, without doing justice at the same time to the great qualities whence that authority arose. The subject is instructive to those who wish to form themselves on whatever of excellence has gone before them. There are many young members in the house (such of late has been the rapid succession of public men) who never saw that prodigy, Charles Townshend; nor of course know what a ferment he was able to excite in everything by the violent ebullition of his mixed virtues and failings. For failings he had undoubtedly—many of us remember them; we are this day considering the effect of them. But he had no failings which were not owing to a noble cause; to an ardent, generous, perhaps an immoderate, passion for fame; a passion which is the instinct of all great souls. He worshipped that goddess wheresoever she appeared: but he paid his particular devotions to her in her favourite habitation, in her chosen temple, the house of commons.—*Speech on American Taxation.*

LORD ROCKINGHAM.

In the year sixty-five, being in a very private station, far enough from any line of business, and not having the honour of a seat in this house, it was my fortune, unknowing and unknown to the then ministry, by the intervention of a common friend, to become connected with a very noble person, and

at the head of the treasury department. It was indeed in a situation of little rank and no consequence, suitable to the mediocrity of my talents and pretensions. But a situation near enough to enable me to see, as well as others, what was going on ; and I did see in that noble person (Lord Rockingham) such sound principles, such an enlargement of mind, such clear and sagacious sense, and such unshaken fortitude, as have bound me, as well as others much better than me, by an inviolable attachment to him from that time forward.

Whether the noble lord (Lord Rockingham) is of a complexion to be bullied by Lord Chatham, or by any man, I must submit to those who know him. I confess, when I look back to that time, I consider him as placed in one of the most trying situations in which, perhaps, any man ever stood. In the house of peers there were very few of the ministry, out of the noble lord's own particular connection (except Lord Egmont, who acted, as far as I could discern, an honourable and manly part), that did not look to some other future arrangement, which warped his politics. There were in both houses new and menacing appearances, that might very naturally drive any other, than a most resolute minister, from his measure or from his station. The household troops openly revolted. The allies of ministry (those, I mean, who supported some of their measures, but refused responsibility for any) endeavoured to undermine their credit, and to take ground that must be fatal to the success of the very cause which they would be thought to countenance. The question of the repeal was brought on by ministry in the committee of this house, in the very instant when it was known that more than one

court negotiation was carrying on with the heads of the opposition. Everything, upon every side, was full of traps and mines. Earth below shook; heaven above menaced; all the elements of ministerial safety were dissolved. It was in the midst of this chaos of plots and counterplots; it was in the midst of this complicated warfare against public opposition and private treachery, that the firmness of that noble person was put to the proof. He never stirred from his ground; no, not an inch. He remained fixed and determined, in principle, in measure, and in conduct. He practised no managements. He secured no retreat. He sought no apology.—*Speech on American Taxation.*

GRENVILLE.

No man can believe, that at this time of day I mean to lean on the venerable memory of a great man, whose loss we deplore in common. Our little party differences have been long ago composed; and I have acted more with him, and certainly with more pleasure with him, than ever I acted against him. Undoubtedly Mr. Grenville was a first-rate figure in this country. With a masculine understanding, and a stout and resolute heart, he had an application undissipated and unwearied. He took public business not as a duty which he was to fulfil, but as a pleasure he was to enjoy; and he seemed to have no delight out of this house, except in such things as some way related to the business that was to be done within it. If he was ambitious, I will say this for him, his ambition was of a noble and generous strain. It was to raise himself, not by the low, pimping politics of a court, but to win his way

to power, through the laborious gradations of public service; and to secure himself a well-earned rank in parliament, by a thorough knowledge of its constitution, and a perfect practice in all its business.

Sir, if such a man fell into errors, it must be from defects not intrinsic; they must be rather sought in the particular habits of his life; which, though they do not alter the ground-work of character, yet tinge it with their own hue. He was bred in a profession. He was bred to the law, which is, in my opinion, one of the first and noblest of human sciences; a science which does more to quicken and invigorate the understanding, than all the other kinds of learning put together; but it is not apt, except in persons very happily born, to open and to liberalise the mind exactly in the same proportion. Passing from that study he did not go very largely into the world; but plunged into business; I mean into the business of office; and the limited and fixed methods and forms established there. Much knowledge is to be had undoubtedly in that line; and there is no knowledge which is not valuable. But it may be truly said, that men too much conversant in office are rarely minds of remarkable enlargement. Their habits of office are apt to give them a turn to think the substance of business not to be much more important than the forms in which it is conducted. These forms are adapted to ordinary occasions; and therefore persons who are nurtured in office do admirably well as long as things go on in their common order; but when the high roads are broken up, and the waters out, when a new and troubled scene is opened, and the file affords no precedent, then it is that a greater knowledge of mankind, and

a far more extensive comprehension of things, is requisite, than ever office gave, or than office can ever give. Mr. Grenville thought better of the wisdom and power of human legislation than in truth it deserves. He conceived, and many conceived along with him, that the flourishing trade of this country was greatly owing to law and institution, and not quite so much to liberty; for but too many are apt to believe regulation to be commerce, and taxes to be revenue.—*Speech on American Taxation.*

SIR GEORGE SAVILE.

To have been the man chosen out to redeem our fellow-citizens from slavery; to purify our laws from absurdity and injustice; and to cleanse our religion from the blot and stain of persecution, would be an honour and happiness to which my wishes would undoubtedly aspire; but to which nothing but my wishes could have possibly entitled me. That great work was in hands in every respect far better qualified than mine. The mover of the bill (the Catholic relief bill) was Sir George Savile.

When an act of great and signal humanity was to be done, and done with all the weight and authority that belonged to it, the world would cast its eyes upon none but him. I hope that few things which have a tendency to bless or to adorn life have wholly escaped my observation in my passage through it. I have sought the acquaintance of that gentleman, and have seen him in all situations. He is a true genius; with an understanding vigorous, and acute, and refined, and distinguishing even to excess; and illuminated with a most unbounded, peculiar, and original cast of imagination. With these he possesses

many external and instrumental advantages; and he makes use of them all. His fortune is among the largest; a fortune which, wholly unincumbered, as it is, with one single charge from luxury, vanity, or excess, sinks under the benevolence of its dispenser. This private benevolence, expanding itself into patriotism, renders his whole being the estate of the public, in which he has not reserved a *peculium* for himself of profit, diversion, or relaxation. During the session, the first in, and the last out of the house of commons; he passes from the senate to the camp; and seldom seeing the seat of his ancestors, he is always in the senate to serve his country, or in the field to defend it. But in all well-wrought compositions, some particulars stand out more eminently than the rest; and the things which will carry his name to posterity, are his two bills; I mean that for a limitation of the claims of the crown upon landed estates; and this for the relief of the Roman Catholics. By the former, he has emancipated property; by the latter he has quieted conscience; and by both he has taught that grand lesson to government and subject, —no longer to regard each other as adverse parties. —*Speech at Bristol, previous to the Election.*

FOX.

And now, having done my duty to the bill, (the East India bill,) let me say a word to the author. I should leave him to his own noble sentiments, if the unworthy and illiberal language with which he has been treated, beyond all example of parliamentary liberty, did not make a few words necessary; not so much in justice to him, as to my own feelings. I must say then, that it will be a distinction honourable to the age,

that the rescue of the greatest number of the human race that ever were so grievously oppressed, from the greatest tyranny that was ever exercised, has fallen to the lot of abilities and dispositions equal to the task ; that it has fallen to one who has the enlargement to comprehend, the spirit to undertake, and the eloquence to support, so great a measure of hazardous benevolence. His spirit is not owing to his ignorance of the state of men and things ; he well knows what snares are spread about his path, from personal animosity, from court intrigues, and possibly from popular delusion. But he has put to hazard his ease, his security, his interest, his power, even his darling popularity, for the benefit of a people whom he has never seen. This is the road that all heroes have trod before him. He is traduced and abused for his supposed motives. He will remember, that obloquy is a necessary ingredient in the composition of all true glory ; he will remember, that it was not only in the Roman customs, but it is in the nature and constitution of things, that calumny and abuse are essential parts of triumph. These thoughts will support a mind, which only exists for honour, under the burthen of temporary reproach. He is doing indeed a great good ; such as rarely falls to the lot, and almost as rarely coincides with the desires, of any man. Let him use his time. Let him give the whole length of the reins to his benevolence. He is now on a great eminence, where the eyes of mankind are turned to him. He may live long, he may do much. But here is the summit. He never can exceed what he does this day.

He has faults ; but they are faults that, though they may in a small degree tarnish the lustre, and

sometimes impede the march, of his abilities, have nothing in them to extinguish the fire of great virtues. In those faults, there is no mixture of deceit, of hypocrisy, of pride, of ferocity, of complexional despotism, or want of feeling for the distresses of mankind. His are faults which might exist in a descendant of Henry the Fourth of France, as they did exist in that father of his country. Henry the Fourth wished that he might live to see a fowl in the pot of every peasant in his kingdom. That sentiment of homely benevolence was worth all the splendid sayings that are recorded of kings. But he wished perhaps for more than could be obtained, and the goodness of the man exceeded the power of the king. But this gentleman, a subject, may this day say this at least, with truth, that he secures the rice in his pot to every man in India. A poet of antiquity thought it one of the first distinctions to a prince whom he meant to celebrate, that through a long succession of generations, he had been the progenitor of an able and virtuous citizen, who by force of the arts of peace, had corrected governments of oppression, and suppressed wars of rapine.

Indole proh quanta juvenis, quantumque daturus
 Ausoniæ populis ventura in sæcula civem.
 Ille super Gangem, super exauditus et Indos,
 Implebit terras voce ; et furialia bella
 Fulmine comescet linguæ.—

This was what was said of the predecessor of the only person to whose eloquence it does not wrong that of the mover of this bill to be compared. But the Ganges and the Indus are the patrimony of the fame of my honourable friend, and not of Cicero.—
Speech on Mr. Fox's East India Bill. 1783.

On my journey with them through life, I met Mr. Fox in my road; and I travelled with him very cheerfully as long as he appeared to me to pursue the same direction with those in whose company I travelled. In the latter stage of our progress, a new scheme of liberty and equality was produced in the world, which either dazzled his imagination, or was owing to some new walks of ambition, which were newly opened to his view. The whole frame and foundation of his politics appear to have suffered about that time a very material alteration. It is about five years since, in consequence of that extraordinary change, that after a pretty long preceding period of distance, coolness, and want of confidence, a total alienation on his part, a complete public rupture has been made between that gentleman and me. Until lately, the breach between us appeared repairable. I trusted that time and reflection, a decisive experience of the mischiefs which have resulted from the proceedings and the system of liberty, on which our difference had arisen, as well as the known sentiments of the best and wisest of our common friends upon that subject, would have brought him to a safer way of thinking. Several of our friends saw no security for keeping things in a better train after this excursion of his, but in the opinion of the party on its old grounds, under the management of Portland. Mr. Fox, if he pleased, might have been comprehended in that system, with the respect and consideration to which his great talents were entitled him, and indeed must secure to him in any arrangement that *could* be made. The Duke of Portland knows how much I wished for, and how earnestly I laboured, that re-union, and upon terms

that might every way be honourable and advantageous to Mr. Fox. His conduct in the last session has extinguished these hopes for ever.—*Observations on the Conduct of the Minority.* 1793.

ADMIRAL KEPPEL.

No man lives too long who lives to do with spirit, and suffer with resignation, what Providence pleases to command or inflict; but indeed they are sharp incommodities which beset old age. It was but the other day that, in putting in order some things which had been brought here on my taking leave of London for ever, I looked over a number of fine portraits, most of them of persons now dead, but whose society, in my better days, made this a proud and happy place. Amongst these was the picture of Lord Keppel. It was painted by an artist worthy of the subject, the excellent friend of that excellent man from their earliest youth, and a common friend of us both, with whom we lived for many years without a moment of coldness, of peevishness, of jealousy, or of jar, to the day of our final separation.

I ever looked on Lord Keppel as one of the greatest and best men of his age; and I loved, and cultivated him accordingly. He was much in my heart, and I believe I was in his to the very last beat. It was at his trial at Portsmouth that he gave me this picture. With what zeal and anxious affection I attended him through that his agony of glory, what part my son took in the early flush and enthusiasm of his virtue, and the pious passion with which he attached himself to all my connections, with what prodigality we both squandered ourselves in courting almost every sort of enmity for his sake, I believe he

felt just as I should have felt such friendship on such an occasion. I partook indeed of this honour, with several of the first, and best, and ablest in the kingdom, but I was behind-hand with none of them ; and I am sure, that if to the eternal disgrace of this nation, and to the total annihilation of every trace of honour and virtue in it, things had taken a different turn from what they did, I should have attended him to the quarter-deck with no less good-will and more pride, though with far other feelings, than I partook of the general flow of national joy that attended the justice that was done to his virtue.

Pardon, my lord, the feeble garrulity of age, which loves to diffuse itself in discourse of the departed great. At my years we live in retrospect alone : and, wholly unfitted for the society of vigorous life, we enjoy the best balm to all wounds, the consolation of friendship in those only whom we have lost for ever. Feeling the loss of Lord Keppel at all times, at no time did I feel it so much as on the first day when I was attacked in the house of lords.

Had he lived, that reverend form would have risen in its place, and, with a mild, parental reprehension to his nephew the Duke of Bedford, he would have told him that the favour of that gracious prince, who had honoured his virtues with the government of the navy of Great Britain, and with a seat in the hereditary great council of his kingdom, was not undeservedly shown to the friend of the best portion of his life, and his faithful companion and counsellor under his rudest trials. He would have told him, that to whomever else these reproaches might be becoming, they were not decorous in his near kindred.

He would have told him that when men in that rank lose decorum they lose everything.

On that day I had a loss in Lord Keppel ; but the public loss of him in this awful crisis—! I speak from much knowledge of the person ; he never would have listened to any compromise with the rabble rout of this sans-culotterie of France. His goodness of heart, his reason, his taste, his public duty, his principles, his prejudices, would have repelled him for ever from all connection with that horrid medley of madness, vice, impiety, and crime.

Lord Keppel had two countries ; one of descent, and one of birth. Their interest and their glory are the same ; and his mind was capacious of both. His family was noble, and it was Dutch : that is, he was the oldest and purest nobility that Europe can boast, among a people renowned above all others for love of their native land. Though it was never shown in insult to any human being, Lord Keppel was something high. It was a wild stock of pride, on which the tenderest of all hearts had grafted the milder virtues. He valued ancient nobility, and he was not disinclined to augment it with new honours. He valued the old nobility and the new, not as an excuse for inglorious sloth, but as an incitement to virtuous activity. He considered it as a sort of cure for selfishness and a narrow mind ; conceiving that a man born in an elevated place in himself was nothing, but everything in what went before, and what was to come after him. Without much speculation, but by the sure instinct of ingenuous feelings, and by the dictates of plain, unsophisticated, natural understanding, he felt that no great commonwealth could by any

possibility long subsist, without a body of some kind or other of nobility, decorated with honour, and fortified by privilege. This nobility forms the chain that connects the ages of a nation, which otherwise (with Mr. Paine) would soon be taught that no one generation can bind another. He felt that no political fabric could be well made without some such order of things as might, through a series of time, afford a rational hope of securing unity, coherence, consistency, and stability to the state. He felt that nothing else can protect it against the levity of courts and the greater levity of the multitude. That to talk of hereditary monarchy, without anything else of hereditary reverence in the commonwealth, was a low-minded absurdity; fit only for those detestable "fools aspiring to be knaves," who began to forge, in 1789, the false money of the French constitution: that it is one fatal objection to all *new* fancied and *new fabricated* republics, (among a people who, once possessing such an advantage, have wickedly and insolently rejected it,) that the *prejudice* of an old nobility is a thing that *cannot* be made. It may be improved, it may be corrected, it may be replenished: men may be taken from it or aggregated to it, but the *thing itself* is matter of *inveterate* opinion, and therefore *cannot* be matter of mere positive institution. He felt that this nobility, in fact, does not exist in wrong of other orders of the state, but by them, and for them.—*Letter to a noble lord (the Duke of Bedford)*.

POPE PIUS VI.

Is it to him, in whose wrong we have in our late negotiation ceded his now unhappy countries near the Rhone, lately amongst the most flourishing (perhaps the most flourishing for their extent) of all the countries upon earth, that we are to prove the sincerity of our resolution to make peace with the republic of barbarism? That venerable potentate and pontiff is sunk deep into the vale of years; he is half disarmed by his peaceful character; his dominions are more than half disarmed by a peace of two hundred years, defended as they were, not by forces, but by reverence; yet in all these straits we see him display, amidst the recent ruins and the new defacements of his plundered capital, along with the mild and decorated piety of the modern, all the spirit and magnanimity of ancient Rome!—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

His illness was long, but borne with a mild and cheerful fortitude, without the least mixture of anything irritable or querulous, agreeably to the placid and even tenor of his whole life. He had, from the beginning of his malady, a distinct view of his dissolution; and he contemplated it with that entire composure, which nothing but the innocence, integrity, and usefulness of his life, and an unaffected submission to the will of Providence, could bestow. In this situation he had every consolation from family tenderness, which his own kindness to his family had indeed well deserved.

Sir Joshua Reynolds was, on very many accounts,

One of the most memorable men of his time. He was the first Englishman who added the praise of the elegant arts to the other glories of his country. In taste, in grace, in facility, in happy invention, and in the richness and harmony of colouring, he was as equal to the great masters of the renowned ages. In his portrait he went beyond them; for he communicated to that department of the art in which English artists are the most engaged, a variety, a delicacy, and a dignity derived from the higher branches, which even those who professed them in a superior manner did not always preserve when they delineated individual nature. His portraits remind the spectator of the invention of history and of the amenity of the landscape. In painting portraits, he appears not to be raised upon that platform, but to descend to it from a higher sphere. His paintings illustrate his lessons, and his lessons seem to have been derived from his paintings. He possessed the theory as perfectly as the practice of his art. To be such a painter, he was a profound and penetrating philosopher.

In full happiness of foreign and domestic fame, admired by the expert in art and by the learned in science, courted by the great, caressed by sovereign powers, and celebrated by distinguished poets, his private humility, modesty, and candour never forsook him, even on surprise or provocation; nor was the least degree of arrogance or assumption visible to the most scrutinising eye in any part of his conduct or discourse.

His talents of every kind—powerful from nature, and not meanly cultivated by letters—his social virtues in all the relations and in all the habitudes of life, rendered him the centre of a very great and

unparalleled variety of agreeable societies, which will be dissipated by his death. He had too much merit not to provoke some jealousy, too much innocence to provoke any enmity. The loss of no man of his time can be felt with more sincere, general, and unmixed sorrow.

“ Hail ! and farewell ! ”

LORD NORTH.

Lord North was a man of admirable parts; of general knowledge; of a versatile understanding fitted for every sort of business; of infinite wit and pleasantry; of a delightful temper; and with a mind most perfectly disinterested. But it would be only to degrade myself by a weak adulation, and not to honour the memory of a great man, to deny that he wanted something of the vigilance and spirit of command, that the time required.—*Letter to a Noble Lord.*

SIR SIDNEY SMITH.

Sir Sydney Smith having attempted, with great gallantry, to cut out a vessel from one of the enemy's harbours, was taken after an obstinate resistance; such as obtained him the marked respect of those who were witnesses of his valour, and knew the circumstances in which it was displayed. Upon his arrival at Paris, he was instantly thrown into prison; where the nature of his situation will best be understood, by knowing, that amongst its *mitigations*, was the permission to walk occasionally in the court, and to enjoy the privilege of shaving himself. On the old system of feelings and principles, his sufferings might have been entitled to consideration, and even in a comparison with those

of citizen La Fayette, to a priority in the order of compassion. If the ministers had neglected to take any steps in his favour, a declaration of the sense of the house of commons would have stimulated them to their duty. If they had caused a representation to be made, such a proceeding would have added force to it. If reprisal should be thought advisable, the address of the house would have given an additional sanction to a measure which would have been, indeed, justifiable without any other sanction than its own reason. But no. Nothing at all like it. In fact, the merit of Sir Sydney Smith, and his claim on British compassion, was of a kind altogether different from that which interested so deeply the authors of the motion in favour of citizen La Fayette. In my humble opinion, Captain Sir Sydney Smith has another sort of merit with the British nation, and something of a higher claim on British humanity, than citizen La Fayette. Faithful, zealous, and ardent, in the service of his king and country ; full of spirit ; full of resources ; going out of the beaten road, but going right, because his uncommon enterprise was not conducted by a vulgar judgment : in his profession, Sir Sydney Smith might be considered as a distinguished person, if any person could well be distinguished in a service in which scarcely a commander can be named without putting you in mind of some action of intrepidity, skill, and vigilance, that has given them a fair title to contend with any men, and in any age. But I will say nothing farther of the merits of Sir Sydney Smith : the mortal animosity of the regicide enemy supersedes all other panegyric. Their hatred is a judgment in his favour without appeal. At present he is lodged in

the tower of the Temple, the last prison of Louis XVI., and the last but one of Maria Antoinetta of Austria; the prison of Louis XVII. ; the prison of Elizabeth of Bourbon.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

GRATTAN.

Surely Great Britain and Ireland ought to join in wreathing a never-fading garland for the head of Grattan.—*Letter to William Smith, Esq.*

CHAPTER VII.

THE POLITICAL CREED AND CONSISTENCY OF
EDMUND BURKE.

Too fond of the right, to pursue the expedient.

GOLDSMITH.

EDMUND BURKE'S IDEA OF LIBERTY.—The distinguishing part of our constitution is its liberty. To preserve that liberty inviolate, seems the particular duty and proper trust of a member of the house of commons. But the liberty, the only liberty I mean, is a liberty connected with order; that not only exists along with order and virtue, but which cannot exist at all without them. It inheres in good and steady government, as in its substance and vital principle.—*Speech on American Taxation.* 1774.

REGARD OF EDMUND BURKE FOR THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION.—I am charged with being an American. If warm affection towards those over whom I claim any share of authority be a crime, I am guilty of this charge. But I do assure you (and they who know me publicly and privately will bear witness to me), that if ever one man lived more zealous than another for the supremacy of parliament, and the rights of this imperial crown, it was myself.—*Speech to the Sheriffs of Bristol.*

CIVIL GOVERNMENT.—I do not know that the colonies have, in any general way, or in any cool

hour, gone much beyond the demand of immunity in relation to taxes. It is not fair to judge of the temper or dispositions of any man, or any set of men, when they are composed and at rest, from their conduct, or their expressions, in a state of disturbance and irritation. It is besides a very great mistake to imagine, that mankind follow up practically any speculative principle, either of government or of freedom, as far as it will go in argument and logical illation. We Englishmen stop very short of the principles upon which we support any given part of our constitution; or even the whole of it together. I could easily, if I had not already tired you, give you very striking and convincing instances of it. This is nothing but what is natural and proper. All government, indeed every human benefit and enjoyment, every virtue, and every prudent act is founded on compromise and barter. We balance inconveniences; we give and take; we remit some rights, that we may enjoy others; and, we choose rather to be happy citizens, than subtle disputants. As we must give away some natural liberty, to enjoy civil advantages; so we must sacrifice some civil liberties, for the advantages to be derived from the communion and fellowship of a great empire. But, in all fair dealings, the thing bought must bear some proportion to the purchase paid. None will barter away the immediate jewel of his soul. Though a great house is apt to make slaves haughty, yet it is purchasing a part of the artificial importance of a great empire too dear, to pay for it all essential rights, and all the intrinsic dignity of human nature. None of us who would not risk his life rather than fall under a government purely

arbitrary. But although there are some amongst us who think our constitution wants many improvements, to make it a complete system of liberty, perhaps none who are of that opinion would think it right to aim at such improvement, by disturbing his country, and risking everything that is dear to him. In every arduous enterprise, we consider what we are to lose, as well as what we are to gain; and the more and better stake of liberty every people possess, the less they will hazard in a vain attempt to make it more. These are *the cords of man*. Man acts from adequate motives relative to his interest; and not on metaphysical speculations. Aristotle, the great master of reasoning, cautions us, and with great weight and propriety, against this species of delusive geometrical accuracy in moral arguments, as the most fallacious of all sophistry.—*Speech on Conciliation with America*. 1775.

THE ANSWER OF EDMUND BURKE TO THE CHARGE OF BEING A PARTISAN.—If I were ready, on any call of my own vanity or interest, or to answer any election purpose, to forsake principles (whatever they are), which I had formed at a mature age, on full reflection, and which had been confirmed by long experience, I should forfeit the only thing which makes you pardon so many errors and imperfections in me. Not that I think it fit for any one to rely too much on his own understanding; or to be filled with a presumption, not becoming a Christian man, in his own personal stability and rectitude.

I hope I am far from that vain confidence, which almost always fails in trial. I know my weakness in all respects, as much at least as any enemy I have;

and I attempt to take security against it. The only method which has ever been found effectual to preserve any man against the corruption of nature and example, is a habit of life and communication of counsels with the most virtuous and public-spirited men of the age you live in. Such a society cannot be kept without advantage, or deserted without shame. For this rule of conduct I may be called in reproach a *party man*; but I am little affected with such aspersions. In the way which they call party, I worship the constitution of your fathers; and I shall never blush for my political company. All reverence to honour, all idea of what it is, will be lost out of the world, before it can be imputed as a fault to any man, that he has been closely connected with those incomparable persons, living and dead, with whom for eleven years I have constantly thought and acted. If I have wandered out of the paths of rectitude into those of interested faction, it was in company with the Saviles, the Dowdeswells, the Wentworths, the Bentincks; with the Lenoxes, the Manchesters, the Keppels, the Saunderses; with the temperate, permanent, hereditary virtue of the whole house of Cavendish; names, among which, some have extended your fame and empire in arms, and all have fought the battle of your liberties in fields not less glorious. These, and many more like these, grafting public principles on private honour, have redeemed the present age, and would have adorned the most splendid period in your history. Where could any man, conscious of his own inability to act alone, and willing to act as he ought to do, have arranged himself better? If any one thinks this kind

of society to be taken up as the best method of gratifying low, personal pride, or ambitious interest, he is mistaken ; and he knows nothing of the world.

Preferring this connection, I do not mean to detract in the slightest degree from others. There are some of those, whom I admire at something of a greater distance, with whom I have had the happiness also perfectly to agree, in almost all the particulars, in which I have differed with some successive administrations, and they are such, as it never can be reputable to any government to reckon among its enemies. I hope there are none of you corrupted with the doctrine taught by wicked men for the worst purposes, and received by the malignant credulity of envy and ignorance, which is, that the men who act upon the public stage are all alike ; all equally corrupt ; all influenced by no other views than the sordid lure of salary and pension. The thing I know by experience to be false. Never expecting to find perfection in men, and not looking for divine attributes in created beings, in my commerce with my contemporaries, I have found much human virtue. I have seen not a little public spirit ; a real subordination of interest to duty ; and a decent and regulated sensibility to honest fame and reputation. The age unquestionably produces (whether in a greater or less number than former times, I know not) daring profligates, and insidious hypocrites. What then ? Am I not to avail myself of whatever good is to be found in the world, because of the mixture of evil that will always be in it ? The smallness of the quantity in currency only heightens the value. They who raise suspicions on the good on account of the behaviour of ill men, are of the party of the latter.

The common cant is no justification for taking this party. I have been deceived, say they, by *Titius* and *Mævius* ; I have been the dupe of this pretender or of that mountebank ; and I can trust appearances no longer. But my credulity and want of discernment cannot, as I conceive, amount to a fair presumption against any man's integrity. A conscientious person would rather doubt his own judgment, than condemn his species. He would say, I have observed without attention, or judged upon erroneous maxims ; I trusted to profession, when I ought to have attended to conduct. Such a man will grow wise, not malignant, by his acquaintance with the world. But he that accuses all mankind of corruption, ought to remember that he is sure to convict only one. In truth I should much rather admit those, whom at any time I have disrelished the most, to be patterns of perfection, than seek a consolation to my own unworthiness, in a general communion of depravity with all about me.

That this ill-natured doctrine should be preached by the missionaries of a court, I do not wonder. It answers their purpose. But that it should be heard among those who pretend to be strong assertors of liberty, is not only surprising, but hardly natural. This moral levelling is a *servile principle*. It leads to practical passive obedience far better than all the doctrines which the pliant accommodation of theology to power has ever produced. It cuts up by the roots, not only all idea of forcible resistance, but even of civil opposition. It disposes men to an abject submission, not by opinion, which may be shaken by argument or altered by passion, but by the strong ties of public and private interest. For if all men

who act in a public situation are equally selfish, corrupt, and venal, what reason can be given for desiring any sort of change, which, besides the evils which must attend all changes, can be productive of no possible advantage? The active men in the state are true samples of the mass. If they are universally depraved, the commonwealth itself is not sound. We may amuse ourselves with talking as much as we please of the virtue of middle or humble life; that is, we may place our confidence in the virtue of those who have never been tried. But if the persons who are continually emerging out of that sphere, be no better than those whom birth has placed above it, what hopes are there in the remainder of the body, which is to furnish the perpetual succession of the state? All who have ever written on government are unanimous, that among a people generally corrupt, liberty cannot long exist. And indeed how is it possible? when those who are to make the laws, to guard, to enforce, or to obey them, are, by a tacit confederacy of manners, indisposed to the spirit of all generous and noble institutions.

I am aware that the age is not what we all wish. But I am sure, that the only means of checking its precipitate degeneracy, is heartily to concur with whatever is the best in our time; and to have some more correct standard of judging what that best is, than the transient and uncertain favour of a court. If once we are able to find, and can prevail on ourselves to strengthen, a union of such men, whatever accidentally becomes indisposed to ill-exercised power, even by the ordinary operation of human passions, must join with that society, and cannot long be joined without in some degree assimilating

to it. Virtue will catch as well as vice by contact; and the public stock of honest, manly principle will daily accumulate. We are not too nicely to scrutinise motives as long as action is irreproachable. It is enough (and for a worthy man perhaps too much) to deal out its infamy to convicted guilt and declared apostacy.

This, gentlemen, has been from the beginning the rule of my conduct; and I mean to continue it, as long as such a body as I have described can by any possibility be kept together; for I should think it the most dreadful of all offences, not only towards the present generation, but to all the future, if I were to do anything which could make the minutest breach in this great conservatory of free principles. Those who perhaps have the same intentions, but are separated by some little political animosities, will I hope discern at last, how little conducive it is to any rational purpose, to lower its reputation. For my part, gentlemen, from much experience, from no little thinking, and from comparing a great variety of things, I am thoroughly persuaded, that the last hopes of preserving the spirit of the English constitution, or of re-uniting the dissipated members of the English race upon a common plan of tranquillity and liberty, does entirely depend on their firm and lasting union; and above all, on their keeping themselves from that despair, which is so very apt to fall on those, whom a violence of character and a mixture of ambitious views do not support through a long, painful, and unsuccessful struggle.—*Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.* 1777.

THE OPINION OF THE PEOPLE.—As to the opinion of the people, which some think, in such cases, is to

be implicitly obeyed ; nearly two years' tranquillity, which followed the act, and its instant imitation in Ireland, proved abundantly, that the late horrible spirit was, in a great measure, the effect of insidious art, and perverse industry, and gross misrepresentation. But suppose that the dislike had been much more deliberate, and much more general than I am persuaded it was—When we know, that the opinions of even the greatest multitudes are the standard of rectitude, I shall think myself obliged to make those opinions the masters of my conscience. But if it may be doubted whether Omnipotence itself is competent to alter the essential constitution of right and wrong, sure I am, that such *things*, as they and I, are possessed of no such power. No man carries further than I do the policy of making government pleasing to the people. But the widest range of this politic complaisance is confined within the limits of justice. I would not only consult the interest of the people, but I would cheerfully gratify their humours. We are all a sort of children that must be soothed and managed. I think I am not austere or formal in my nature. I would bear, I would even myself play my part in, any innocent buffooneries, to divert them. But I never will act the tyrant for their amusement. If they will mix malice in their sports, I shall never consent to throw them any living, sentient creature whatsoever, no not so much as a kitling, to torment. *Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.* 1777.

EDMUND BURKE'S INDEPENDENT SPIRIT.—“But if I profess all this impolitic stubbornness, I may chance never to be elected into Parliament.” It is certainly not pleasing to be put out of the public service. But I wish to be a member of parliament, to have my

share of doing good and resisting evil. It would therefore be absurd to renounce my objects, in order to obtain my seat. I deceive myself indeed most grossly, if I had not much rather pass the remainder of my life hidden in the recesses of the deepest obscurity, feeding my mind even with the visions and imaginations of such things, than to be placed on the most splendid throne of the universe, tantalised with a denial of the practice of all which can make the greatest situation any other than the greatest curse. Gentlemen, I have had my day. I can never sufficiently express my gratitude to you for having set me in a place, wherein I could lend the slightest help to great and laudable designs. If I have had my share in any measure giving quiet to private property, and private conscience; if by my vote I have aided in securing to families the best possession, peace; if I have joined in reconciling kings to their subjects, and subjects to their prince; if I have assisted to loosen the foreign holdings of the citizen, and taught him to look for his protection to the laws of his country, and for his comfort to the good-will of his countrymen;—if I have thus taken my part with the best of men in the best of their actions, I can shut the book; I might wish to read a page or two more—but this is enough for my measure. I have not lived in vain. I have lived too long to be served by apologies, or to stand in need of them. The part I have acted has been in open day: and to hold out to a conduct, which stands in that clear and steady light for all its good and all its evil, to hold out to that conduct the paltry winking tapers of excuses and promises—I never will do it. They may obscure it with their smoke; but they never

can illumine sunshine by such a flame as theirs.—
Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol. 1777.

ANSWER OF EDMUND BURKE TO THE CHARGE OF HIS BEING AN ARISTOCRAT.—I am accused, I am told abroad, of being a man of aristocratic principles. If by aristocracy they mean the peers, I have no vulgar admiration, nor any vulgar antipathy, towards them; I hold their order in cold and decent respect. I hold them to be of an absolute necessity in the constitution; but I think they are only good when kept within their proper bounds. I trust, whenever there has been a dispute between these houses, the part I have taken has not been equivocal. If by the aristocracy, which indeed comes nearer to the point, they mean an adherence to the rich and powerful against the poor and weak, this would indeed be a very extraordinary part. I have incurred the odium of gentlemen in this house for not paying sufficient regard to men of ample property. When, indeed, the smallest rights of the poorest people in the kingdom are in question, I would set my face against any act of pride and power countenanced by the highest that are in it; and if it should come to the last extremity, and to a contest of blood, God forbid! God forbid!—my part is taken; I would take my fate with the poor, and low, and feeble. But if these people came to turn their liberty into a cloak for maliciousness, and to seek a privilege of exemption, not from power, but from the rules of morality and virtuous discipline, then I would join my hand to make them feel the force, which a few, united in a good cause; have over a multitude of the profligate and ferocious.—*Speech on a Bill for the Repeal of the Marriage Act.* 1781.

THEORETIC CHANGES.—I feel an insuperable reluctance in giving my hand to destroy any established institution of government, upon a theory, however plausible it may be.—*Speech on Mr. Fox's East India Bill.* 1783.

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE REVOLUTION IN 1688.—I certainly have the honour to belong to more clubs than one, in which the constitution of this kingdom and the principles of the glorious Revolution are held in high reverence; and I reckon myself among the most forward in my zeal for maintaining that constitution and those principles in their utmost purity and vigour. It is because I do so that I think it necessary for me that there should be no mistake. Those who cultivate the memory of our Revolution, and those who are attached to the constitution of this kingdom, will take good care how they are involved with persons, who, under the pretext of zeal towards the Revolution and constitution, too frequently wander from their true principles; and are ready on every occasion to depart from the firm but cautious and deliberate spirit which produced the one, and which presides in the other.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.* 1790.

WHIG PRINCIPLES.—Sir Joseph Jekyl, so often quoted, considered the preservation of the monarchy, and of the rights and prerogatives of the crown, as essential objects with all sound Whigs; and that they were bound, not only to maintain them when injured or invaded, but to exert themselves as much for their re-establishment, if they should happen to be overthrown by popular fury, as any of their own more immediate and popular rights and privileges, if the latter should be at any time subverted by the

crown. For this reason he puts the cases of the *Revolution* and the *Restoration* exactly upon the same footing. He plainly marks, that it was the object of all honest men, not to sacrifice one part of the constitution to another; and much more, not to sacrifice any of them to visionary theories of the rights of man; but to preserve our whole inheritance in the constitution, in all its members and all its relations, entire and unimpaired, from generation to generation. In this Mr. Burke exactly agrees with him.—*Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs.* 1791.

EDMUND BURKE'S APPEAL TO HIS OWN CHARACTER AND CONDUCT.—I have little to recommend my opinions but long observation and much impartiality. They come from one who has been no tool of power, no flatterer of greatness; and who in his last acts does not wish to belie the tenor of his life. They come from one, almost the whole of whose public exertion has been a struggle for the liberty of others; from one in whose breast no anger durable or vehement has ever been kindled, but by what he considered as tyranny; and who snatches from his share in the endeavours which are used by good men to discredit opulent oppression, the hours he has employed on your affairs; and who in so doing persuades himself he has not departed from his usual office: they come from one who desires honours, distinctions, and emoluments, but little; and who expects them not at all; who has no contempt for fame, and no fear of obloquy; who shuns contention, though he will hazard an opinion: from one who wishes to preserve consistency, but who would preserve consistency by varying his means to secure the unity of his end; and, when the equipoise of the

vessel in which he sails may be endangered by overloading it upon one side, is desirous of carrying the small weight of his reasons to that which may preserve its equipoise.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.* 1790.

EDMUND BURKE'S DEFENCE OF HIS OWN CONSISTENCY.—I pass to the next head of charge, Mr. Burke's inconsistency. It is certainly a great aggravation of his fault in embracing false opinions, that in doing so he is not supposed to fill up a void, but that he is guilty of a dereliction of opinions that are true and laudable. This is the great gist of the charge against him. It is not so much that he is wrong in his book, (that however is alleged also,) as that he has therein belied his whole life. I believe, if he could venture to value himself upon anything, it is on the virtue of consistency that he would value himself the most. Strip him of this, and you leave him naked indeed.

In the case of any man who had written something, and spoken a great deal, upon very multifarious matter, during upwards of twenty-five years' public service, and in as great a variety of important events as perhaps have ever happened in the same number of years, it would appear a little hard, in order to charge such a man with inconsistency, to see collected by his friend, a sort of digest of his sayings, even to such as were merely sportive and jocular. This digest, however, has been made, with equal pains and partiality, and without bringing out those passages of his writings which might tend to show with what restrictions any expressions, quoted from him, ought to have been understood. From a great statesman he did not quite expect this mode of inqui-

sition. If it only appeared in the works of common pamphleteers, Mr. Burke might safely trust to his reputation. When thus urged, he ought, perhaps, to do a little more. It shall be as little as possible, for I hope not much is wanting. To be totally silent on his charges would not be respectful to Mr. Fox. Accusations sometimes derive a weight from the persons who make them, to which they are not entitled for their matter.

He who thinks that the British constitution ought to consist of the three members, of three very different natures, of which it does actually consist, and thinks it his duty to preserve each of those members in its proper place, and with its proper proportion of power, must (as each shall happen to be attacked) vindicate the three several parts on the several principles peculiarly belonging to them. He cannot assert the democratic part on the principles on which monarchy is supported, nor can he support monarchy on the principles of democracy; nor can he maintain aristocracy on the grounds of the one or of the other, or of both. All these he must support on grounds that are totally different, though practically they may be, and happily with us they are, brought into one harmonious body. A man could not be consistent in defending such various, and, at first view, discordant, parts of a mixed constitution, without that sort of inconsistency with which Mr. Burke stands charged.

As any one of the great members of this constitution happens to be endangered, he that is a friend to all of them chooses and presses the topics necessary for the support of the part attacked, with all the strength, the earnestness, the vehemence, with all

the power of stating, of argument, and of colouring, which he happens to possess, and which the case demands. He is not to embarrass the minds of his hearers, or to encumber or overlay his speech, by bringing into view at once (as if he were reading an academic lecture) all that may and ought, when a just occasion presents itself, to be said in favour of the other members. At that time they are out of the court; there is no question concerning them. Whilst he opposes his defence on the part where the attack is made, he presumes, that for his regard to the just rights of all the rest, he has credit in every candid mind. He ought not to apprehend, that his raising fences about popular privileges this day, will infer that he ought, on the next, to concur with those who would pull down the throne: because, on the next, he defends the throne, it ought not to be supposed that he has abandoned the rights of the people.

A man, who, among various objects of his equal regard, is secure of some, and full of anxiety for the fate of others, is apt to go to much greater lengths in his preference of the objects of his immediate solicitude than Mr. Burke has ever done. A man so circumstanced often seems to undervalue, to vilify, almost to reprobate and disown, those that are out of danger. This is the voice of nature and truth, and not of inconsistency and false pretence. The danger of anything very dear to us removes, for the moment, every other affection from the mind. When Priam had his whole thoughts employed on the body of his Hector, he repels with indignation, and drives from him with a thousand reproaches, his surviving sons, who with an officious piety crowded about him to offer their assistance. A good critic (there is no

better than Mr. Fox) would say, that this is a master-stroke, and marks a deep understanding of nature in the father of poetry. He would despise a Zoilus, who would conclude from this passage that Homer meant to represent this man of affliction as hating, or being indifferent and cold in his affections to, the poor relics of his house, or that he preferred a dead carcass to his living children.

Mr. Burke does not stand in need of an allowance of this kind, which, if he did, by candid critics ought to be granted to him. If the principles of a mixed constitution be admitted, he wants no more to justify to consistency everything he has said and done during the course of a political life just touching to its close. I believe that gentleman has kept himself more clear of running into the fashion of wild, visionary theories, or of seeking popularity through every means, than any man perhaps ever did in the same situation.

He was the first man who, on the hustings, at a popular election, rejected the authority of instructions from constituents: or who, in any place, has argued so fully against it. Perhaps the discredit into which that doctrine of compulsive instructions under our constitution is since fallen, may be due, in a great degree, to his opposing himself to it in that manner, and on that occasion.

The reformers in representation, and the bills for shortening the duration of parliaments, he uniformly and steadily opposed for many years together, in contradiction to many of his best friends. These friends, however, in his better days, when they had more to hope from his service and more to fear from his loss than now they have, never chose to find any inconsistency between his acts and expressions in

favour of liberty, and his votes on those questions. But there is a time for all things.

Against the opinion of many friends, even against the solicitation of some of them, he opposed those of the church clergy, who had petitioned the house of commons to be discharged from the subscription. Although he supported the dissenters in their petition for the indulgence which he had refused to the clergy of the established church; in this, as he was not guilty of it, so he was not reproached with inconsistency. At the same time he promoted, and against the wish of several, the clause that gave the dissenting teachers another subscription in the place of that which was then taken away. Neither at that time was the reproach of inconsistency brought against him. People could then distinguish between a difference in conduct under a variation of circumstances, and an inconsistency in principle. It was not then thought necessary to be freed of him as of an incumbrance.

These instances, a few among many, are produced as an answer to the insinuation of his having pursued high popular courses, which in his late book he has abandoned. Perhaps in his whole life he has never omitted a fair occasion, with whatever risk to him of obloquy as an individual, with whatever detriment to his interest as a member of opposition, to assert the very same doctrines which appear in that book. He told the house, upon an important occasion, and pretty early in his service, that "being warned by the ill effect of a contrary procedure in great examples, he had taken his ideas of liberty very low; in order that they should stick to him, and that he might stick to them to the end of his life."

At popular elections the most rigorous casuists will remit a little of their severity. They will allow to a candidate some unqualified effusions in favour of freedom, without binding him to adhere to them in their utmost extent. But Mr. Burke put a more strict rule upon himself than most moralists would put upon others. At his first offering himself to Bristol, where he was almost sure he should not obtain, on that or any occasion, a single Tory vote, (in fact he did obtain but one,) and rested wholly on the Whig interest, he thought himself bound to tell to the electors, both before and after his election, exactly what a representative they had to expect in him.

“The *distinguishing* part of our constitution (he said) is its liberty. To preserve that liberty inviolate, is the *peculiar* duty and *proper* trust of a member of the house of commons. But the liberty, the *only* liberty I mean, is a liberty connected with *order*, and that not only exists *with* order and virtue, but cannot exist at all *without* them. It inheres in good and steady government, as in *its substance and vital principle.*”

The liberty to which Mr. Burke declared himself attached is not French liberty. That liberty is nothing but the rein given to vice and confusion. Mr. Burke was then, as he was at the writing of his Reflections, awfully impressed with the difficulties arising from the complex state of our constitution and our empire, and that it might require, in different emergencies, different sorts of exertions, and the successive call upon all the various principles which uphold and justify it. This will appear from what he said at the close of the poll.

“To be a good member of parliament is, let me tell you, no easy task ; especially at this time, when there is so strong a disposition to run into the perilous extremes of *servile* compliance, or *wild popularity*. To unite circumspection with vigour, is absolutely necessary ; but it is extremely difficult. We are now members for a rich commercial *city* ; this city, however, is but a part of a rich commercial *nation*, the interests of which are *various, multiform, and intricate*. We are members for that great *nation* which, however, is itself but a part of a great *empire*, extended by our virtue and our fortune to the farthest limits of the east and of the west. *All* these wide-spread interests must be *considered* ; must be *compared* ; must be *reconciled*, if possible. We are members for a *free* country ; and surely we all know that the machine of a free constitution is no *simple* thing ; but as *intricate* and as *delicate*, as it is valuable. We are members in a *great and ancient* MONARCHY ; and we must preserve religiously the true legal rights of the sovereign, which form the key-stone that binds together the noble and well-constructed arch of our empire and our constitution. A constitution made up of *balanced powers*, must ever be a critical thing. As such I mean to touch that part of it which comes within my reach.”

In this manner Mr. Burke spoke to his constituents seventeen years ago. He spoke, not like a partisan of one particular member of our constitution, but as a person strongly, and on principle, attached to them all. He thought these great and essential members ought to be preserved, and preserved each in its place ; and that the monarchy ought not only to be secured in its peculiar existence, but in its

pre-eminence too, as the presiding and connecting principle of the whole. Let it be considered, whether the language of his book, printed in 1790, differs from his speech at Bristol in 1774.

With equal justice his opinions on the American war are introduced, as if in his late work he had belied his conduct and opinions in the debates which arose upon that great event. On the American war he never had any opinions which he has seen occasion to retract, or which he has ever retracted. He considered the Americans as standing at that time, and in that controversy, in the same relation to England, as England did to King James the Second, in 1688. He believed, that they had taken up arms from one motive only ; that is, our attempting to tax them without their consent ; to tax them for the purposes of maintaining civil and military establishments. If this attempt of ours could have been practically established, he thought, with them, that their assemblies would become totally useless ; that, under the system of policy which was then pursued, the Americans could have no sort of security for their laws or liberties, or for any part of them ; and that the very circumstance of *our* freedom would have augmented the weight of *their* slavery.

Considering the Americans on that defensive footing, he thought Great Britain ought instantly to have closed with them by the repeal of the taxing act. He was of opinion that our general rights over that country would have been preserved by this timely concession.* When instead of this, a Boston port bill, a Massachusetts charter bill, a Fishery bill, an Inter-course bill, I know not how many hostile bills, rushed

* See his speech on American taxation, the 19th of April, 1774.

out like so many tempests from all points of the compass, and were accompanied first with great fleets and armies of English, and followed afterwards with great bodies of foreign troops, he thought that their cause grew daily better, because daily more defensive; and that ours, because daily more offensive, grew daily worse. He therefore, in two motions, in two successive years, proposed in parliament many concessions beyond what he had reason to think in the beginning of the troubles would ever be seriously demanded.

So circumstanced, he certainly never could and never did wish the colonists to be subdued by arms. He was fully persuaded, that if such should be the event, they must be held in that subdued state by a great body of standing forces, and perhaps of foreign forces. He was strongly of opinion that such armies, first victorious over Englishmen, in a conflict for English constitutional rights and privileges, and afterwards habituated (though in America) to keep an English people in a state of abject subjection, would prove fatal in the end to the liberties of England itself; that in the meantime this military system would lie as an oppressive burthen upon the national finances; that it would constantly breed and feed new discussions, full of heat and acrimony, leading possibly to a new series of wars; and that foreign powers, whilst we continued in a state at once burthened and distracted, must at length obtain a decided superiority over us. On what part of his late publication, or on what expression that might have escaped him in that work, is any man authorised to charge Mr. Burke with a contradiction to the line of his conduct, and to the current of his doc-

trines on the American war? The pamphlet is in the hands of his accusers, let them point out the passage if they can. . . .

Mr. Burke has been also reproached with an inconsistency between his late writings and his former conduct, because he had proposed in parliament several economical, leading to several constitutional reforms. Mr. Burke thought, with a majority of the house of commons, that the influence of the crown at one time was too great; but after his majesty had, by a gracious message, and several subsequent acts of parliament, reduced it to a standard which satisfied Mr. Fox himself, and, apparently at least, contented whoever wished to go farthest in that reduction, is Mr. Burke to allow that it would be right for us to proceed to indefinite lengths upon that subject? that it would therefore be justifiable in a people owing allegiance to a monarchy, and professing to maintain it, not to *reduce*, but wholly to *take away all* prerogative, and *all* influence whatsoever?—Must his having made, in virtue of a plan of economical regulation, a reduction of the influence of the crown, compel him to allow, that it would be right in the French or in us to bring a king to so abject a state, as in function not to be so respectable as an under-sheriff, but in person not to differ from the condition of a mere prisoner? One would think that such a thing as a medium had never been heard of in the moral world.

This mode of arguing from your having done *anything* in a certain line, to the necessity of doing *everything*, has political consequences of other moment than those of a logical fallacy. If no man can propose any diminution or modification of an invidious

or dangerous power or influence in government, without entitling friends turned into adversaries to argue him into the destruction of all prerogative, and to a spoliation of the whole patronage of royalty, I do not know what can more effectually deter persons of sober minds from engaging in any reform; nor how the worst enemies to the liberty of the subject could contrive any method more fit to bring all correctives on the power of the crown into suspicion and disrepute.

If, say his accusers, the dread of too great influence in the crown of Great Britain could justify the degree of reform which he adopted, the dread of a return under the despotism of a monarchy might justify the people of France in going much further, and reducing monarchy to its present nothing. Mr. Burke does not allow that a sufficient argument *ad hominem* is inferable from these premises. If the horror of the excesses of an absolute monarchy furnishes a reason for abolishing it, no monarchy once absolute (all have been so at one period or other) could ever be limited. It must be destroyed; otherwise no way could be found to quiet the fears of those who were formerly subjected to that sway. But the principle of Mr. Burke's proceeding ought to lead him to a very different conclusion;—to this conclusion,—that a monarchy is a thing perfectly susceptible of reform: perfectly susceptible of a balance of power; and that, when reformed and balanced, for a great country, it is the best of all governments. The example of our country might have led France, as it has led him, to perceive that monarchy is not only reconcileable to liberty, but that it may be rendered a great and stable security to its perpetual enjoyment. No correctives

which he proposed to the power of the crown could lead him to approve of a plan of a republic (if so it may be reputed) which has no correctives, and which he believes to be incapable of admitting any. No principle of Mr. Burke's conduct or writings obliged him, from consistency, to become an advocate for an exchange of mischiefs; no principle of his could compel him to justify the setting up in the place of a mitigated monarchy, a new and far more despotic power, under which there is no trace of liberty, except what appears in confusion and in crime. . . .

So far as to the attack on Mr. Burke, in consequence of his reforms.

To show that he has in his last publication abandoned those principles of liberty which have given energy to his youth, and in spite of his censors will afford repose and consolation to his declining age, those, who have thought proper in parliament to declare against his book, ought to have produced something in it, which directly or indirectly militates with any rational plan of free government. It is something extraordinary, that they, whose memories have so well served them with regard to light and ludicrous expressions which years had consigned to oblivion, should not have been able to quote a single passage in a piece so lately published, which contradicts anything he has formerly ever said in a style either ludicrous or serious. They quote his former speeches, and his former votes, but not one syllable from the book. It is only by a collation of the one with the other that the alleged inconsistency can be established. But as they are unable to cite any such contradictory passage, so neither can they show anything in the general tendency and spirit of the

whole work unfavourable to a rational and generous spirit of liberty; unless a warm opposition to the spirit of levelling, to the spirit of impiety, to the spirit of proscription, plunder, murder, and cannibalism, be adverse to the true principles of freedom.

The author of that book is supposed to have passed from extreme to extreme; but he has always kept himself in a medium. This charge is not so wonderful. It is in the nature of things, that they who are in the centre of a circle should appear directly opposed to those who view them from any part of the circumference. In that middle point, however, he will still remain, though he may hear people who themselves run beyond Aurora and the Ganges, cry out, that he is at the extremity of the west.

In the same debate Mr. Burke was represented by Mr. Fox as arguing in a manner which implied that the British constitution could not be defended, but by abusing all republics ancient and modern. He said nothing to give the least ground for such a censure. He never abused all republics. He has never professed himself a friend or an enemy to republics or to monarchies in the abstract. He thought that the circumstances and habits of every country, which it is always perilous and productive of the greatest calamities to force, are to decide upon the form of its government. There is nothing in his nature, his temper, or his faculties, which should make him an enemy to any republic modern or ancient. Far from it. He has studied the form and spirit of republics very early in life; he has studied them with great attention; and with a mind undisturbed by affection or prejudice. He is indeed convinced that the science of government would be poorly cultivated

without that study. But the result in his mind from that investigation has been, and is, that neither England nor France, without infinite detriment to them, as well in the event as in the experiment, could be brought into a republican form; but that everything republican which can be introduced with safety into either of them, must be built upon a monarchy; built upon a real, not a nominal, monarchy, *as its essential basis*; that all such institutions, whether aristocratic or democratic, must originate from their crown, and in all their proceedings must refer to it; that by the energy of that mainspring alone those republican parts must be set in action, and from thence must derive their whole legal effect, (as amongst us they actually do,) or the whole will fall into confusion. These republican members have no other point but the crown in which they can possibly unite.

This is the opinion expressed in Mr. Burke's book. He has never varied in that opinion since he came to years of discretion.

These revolutionists indeed may be well thought to vary in their conduct. He is, however, far from accusing them, in this variation, of the smallest degree of inconsistency. He is persuaded that they are totally indifferent at which end they begin the demolition of the constitution. Some are for commencing their operations with the destruction of the civil powers, in order the better to pull down the ecclesiastical; some wish to begin with the ecclesiastical, in order to facilitate the ruin of the civil; some would destroy the house of commons through the crown; some the crown through the house of commons; and some would overturn both the one

and the other through what they call the people. But I believe that this injured writer will think it not at all inconsistent with his present duty, or with his former life, strenuously to oppose all the various partisans of destruction, let them begin where, or when, or how they will. No man would set his face more determinedly against those who should attempt to deprive them, or any description of men, of the rights they possess. No man would be more steady in preventing them from abusing those rights, to the destruction of that happy order under which they enjoy them. As to their title to anything further, it ought to be grounded on the proof they give of the safety with which power may be trusted in their hands. When they attempt without disguise, not to win it from our affections, but to force it from our fears, they shew, in the character of their means of obtaining it, the use they would make of their dominion. That writer is too well read in men not to know how often the desire and design of a tyrannic domination lurks in the claim of an extravagant liberty. Perhaps in the beginning it *always* displays itself in that manner. No man has ever affected power which he did not hope from the favour of the existing government, in any other mode.—*Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*. 1791.

EDMUND BURKE'S DESCRIPTION OF HIMSELF IN 1795.—It is true, my lord, what you say, that, through our public life, we have generally sailed on somewhat different tacks. We have so, undoubtedly, and we should do so still, if I had continued longer to keep the sea. In that difference, you rightly observe, that I have always done justice to your skill and ability as a navigator, and to your

good intentions towards the safety of the cargo, and of the ship's company. I cannot say now that we are on different tacks. There would be no propriety in the metaphor. I can sail no longer. My vessel cannot be said to be even in port. She is wholly condemned and broken up. To have an idea of that vessel, you must call to mind what you have often seen on the Kentish road. Those planks of tough and hardy oak, that used for years to brave the buffets of the Bay of Biscay, are now turned, with their warped grain, and empty trunnion-holes, into very wretched pales for the enclosure of a wretched farm-yard.—*Letter to Lord Auckland.* 1795.

THE DECLINE OF STATES.—Far from repenting, I would to God that new faculties had been called up in me, in favour not of this or that man, or this or that system, but of the general, vital principle, that whilst it was in its vigour produced the state of things transmitted to us from our fathers: but which, through the joint operations of the abuses of authority and liberty, may perish in our hands. I am not of opinion that the race of men, and the commonwealths they create, like the bodies of individuals, grow effete and languid and bloodless, and ossify by the necessities of their own conformation, and the fatal operation of longevity and time. These analogies between bodies natural and politic, though they may sometimes illustrate arguments, furnish no argument of themselves. They are but too often used under the colour of a specious philosophy, to find apologies for the despair of laziness and pusillanimity, and to excuse the want of all manly efforts, when the exigencies of our country call for them more loudly.—*Letter to W. Elliot, Esq.* 1795.

I am not quite of the mind of those speculators who seem assured, that necessarily and by the constitution of things, all states have the same periods of infancy, manhood, and decrepitude, that are found in the individuals who compose them. Parallels of this sort rather furnish similitudes to illustrate or adorn than supply analogies from whence to reason. The objects which are attempted to be forced into an analogy, are not found in the same classes of existence. Individuals are physical beings, subject to laws universal and invariable. The immediate cause acting in these laws may be obscure; the general results are subjects of certain calculation. But commonwealths are not physical but moral essences. They are artificial combinations, and, in their proximate efficient cause, the arbitrary productions of the human mind. We are not yet acquainted with the laws which necessarily influence the stability of that kind of work made by that kind of agent. There is not in the physical order (with which they do not appear to hold any assignable connection) a distinct cause by which any of those fabrics must necessarily grow, flourish, or decay; much more obscure, and much more difficult to trace, than the foreign causes that tend to raise, to depress, and sometimes to overwhelm a community.

It is often impossible, in these political inquiries, to find any proportion between the apparent force of any moral causes we may assign and their known operation. We are therefore obliged to deliver up that operation to mere chance, or, more piously (perhaps more rationally), to the occasional interposition and irresistible hand of the Great Disposer. We

have seen states of considerable duration, which for ages have remained nearly as they have begun, and could hardly be said to ebb or flow. Some appear to have spent their vigour at their commencement. Some have blazed out in their glory a little before their extinction. The meridian of some has been the most splendid. Others, and they the greatest number, have fluctuated, and experienced at different periods of their existence a great variety of fortune. At the very moment when some of them seemed plunged in unfathomable abysses of disgrace and disaster, they have suddenly emerged. They have begun a new course and opened a new reckoning ; and, even in the depths of their calamity, and on the very ruins of their country, have laid the foundations of a towering and durable greatness. All this has happened without any apparent previous change in the general circumstances which had brought on their distress. The death of a man at a critical juncture, his disgust, his retreat, his disgrace, have brought innumerable calamities on a whole nation. A common soldier, a child, a girl at the door of an inn, have changed the face of fortune, and almost of nature.

Such, and often influenced by such causes, has commonly been the fate of monarchies of long duration. They have their ebbs and their flows.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.* 1796.

THE REVOLUTIONARY SPIRIT IN FRANCE.—My ideas and my principle led me, in this contest, to encounter France, not as a state, but as a faction. The vast territorial extent of that country, its immense population, its riches of production, its riches of commerce and convention—the whole aggregate mass of

what, in ordinary cases, constitutes the force of a state, to me were but objects of secondary consideration. They might be balanced ; and they have been often more than balanced. Great as these things are, they are not what make the faction formidable. It is the faction that makes them truly dreadful. That faction is the evil spirit that possesses the body of France ; that informs it as a soul ; that stamps upon its ambition, and upon all its pursuits, a characteristic mark, which strongly distinguishes them from the same general passions, and the same general views, in other men and in other communities. It is that spirit which instills into them a new, a pernicious, a desolating activity. Constituted as France was ten years ago, it was not in that France to shake, to shatter, and to overwhelm Europe in the manner that we behold. A sure destruction impends over those infatuated princes, who, in the conflict with this new and unheard-of power, proceed as if they were engaged in a war that bore a resemblance to their former contests ; or that they can make peace in the spirit of their former arrangements of pacification. Here the beaten path is the very reverse of the safe road.

As to me, I was always steadily of opinion, that this disorder was not in its nature intermittent. I conceived that the contest, once begun, could not be laid down again, to be resumed at our discretion ; but that our first struggle with this evil would also be our last. I never thought that we could make peace with the system ; because it was not for the sake of an object we pursued in rivalry with each other, but with the system itself, that we were at war. As I understood the matter, we were at war

not with its conduct, but with its existence ; convinced that its existence and its hostility were the same.

The faction is not local or territorial. It is a general evil. Where it least appears in action, it is still full of life. In its sleep it recruits its strength, and prepares its exertion. Its spirit lies deep in the corruption of our common nature. The social order which restrains it, feeds it. It exists in every country in Europe ; and among all orders of men in every country, who look up to France as to a common head. The centre is there. The circumference is the world of Europe wherever the race of Europe may be settled. Everywhere else the faction is militant ; in France it is triumphant. In France is the bank of deposit, and the bank of circulation, of all the pernicious principles that are forming in every state. It will be a folly scarcely deserving of pity, and too mischievous for contempt, to think of restraining it in any other country whilst it is predominant there. War, instead of being the cause of its force, has suspended its operation. It has given a reprieve, at least, to the Christian world.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.* 1796.

EDMUND BURKE'S ACCOUNT OF HIS OWN PARTY.—
At that time I was connected with men of high place in the community. They loved liberty as much as the Duke of Bedford can do ; and they understood it at least as well. Perhaps their politics, as usual, took a tincture from their character, and they cultivated what they loved. The liberty they pursued was a liberty inseparable from order, from virtue, from morals, and from religion ; and was neither hypocritically nor fanatically followed. They did not wish that liberty, in itself one of the first of

blessings, should in its perversion become the greatest curse which could fall upon mankind. To preserve the constitution entire, and practically equal to all the great ends of its reformation, not in one single part, but in all its parts, was to them the first object. Popularity and power they regarded alike. These were with them only different means of obtaining that object; and had no preference over each other in their minds, but as one or the other might afford a surer or a less certain prospect of arriving at that end. It is some consolation to me in the cheerless gloom, which darkens the evening of my life, that with them I commenced my political career, and never for a moment, in reality, nor in appearance, for any length of time, was separated from their good wishes and good opinion.—*Letter to a Noble Lord.* 1796.

EDMUND BURKE'S PENSION.—In one thing I can excuse the Duke of Bedford for his attack upon me and my mortuary pension. He cannot readily comprehend the transaction he condemns. What I have obtained was the fruit of no bargain; the production of no intrigue; the result of no compromise; the effect of no solicitation. The first suggestion of it never came from me, mediately or immediately, to His Majesty or any of his ministers. It was long known that the instant my engagements would permit it, and before the heaviest of all calamities had for ever condemned me to obscurity and sorrow, I had resolved on a total retreat. I had executed that design. I was entirely out of the way of serving or of hurting any statesman, or any party, when the ministers so generously and so nobly carried into effect the spontaneous bounty of the

crown. Both descriptions have acted as became them. When I could no longer serve them, the ministers have considered my situation. When I could no longer hurt them, the revolutionists have trampled on my infirmity. My gratitude, I trust, is equal to the manner in which the benefit was conferred. It came to me, indeed, at a time of life, and in a state of mind and body, in which no circumstance of fortune could afford me any real pleasure. But this was no fault in the royal donor, or in his ministers, who were pleased, in acknowledging the merits of an invalid servant of the public, to assuage the sorrows of a desolate old man.—*Letter to a Noble Lord.* 1796.

REASONS OF EDMUND BURKE FOR DEFENDING HIS POLITICAL CONDUCT.—Had it pleased God to continue to me the hopes of a succession, I should have been, according to my mediocrity, and the mediocrity of the age I live in, a sort of founder of a family; I should have left a son, who, in all the points in which personal merit can be viewed, in science, in erudition, in genius, in taste, in honour, in generosity, in humanity, in every liberal sentiment, and every liberal accomplishment, would not have shown himself inferior to the Duke of Bedford, or to any of those whom he traces in his line. His Grace very soon would have wanted all plausibility in his attack upon that provision which belonged more to mine than to me. He would soon have supplied every deficiency, and symmetrised every disproportion. It would not have been for that successor to resort to any stagnant wasting reservoir of merit in me, or in any ancestry. He had in himself a salient, living spring of generous and manly action. Every day he lived he would

have re-purchased the bounty of the crown, and ten times more, if ten times more he had received. He was made a public creature; and had no enjoyment whatever, but in the performance of some duty. At this exigent moment, the loss of a finished man is not easily supplied.

But a Disposer whose power we are little able to resist, and whose wisdom it behoves us not at all to dispute, has ordained it in another manner, and (whatever my querulous weakness might suggest) a far better. The storm has gone over me; and I lie like one of those old oaks which the late hurricane has scattered about me. I am stripped of all my honours, I am torn up by the roots, and lie prostrate on the earth! There; and prostrate there, I most unfeignedly recognise the divine justice, and in some degree submit to it. But whilst I humble myself before God, I do not know that it is forbidden to repel the attacks of unjust and inconsiderate man. The patience of Job is proverbial. After some of the convulsive struggles of our irritable nature, he submitted himself and repented in dust and ashes. But even so, I do not find him blamed for reprehending, and with a considerable degree of verbal asperity, those ill-natured neighbours of his, who visited his dunghill to read moral, political, and economical lectures on his misery. I am alone. I have none to meet my enemies in the gate. Indeed, my Lord, I greatly deceive myself, if in this hard season I would give a peck of refuse of wheat for all that is called fame and honour in the world. This is the appetite but of a few. It is a luxury, it is a privilege, it is an indulgence for those who are at ease. But we are all of us made to shun disgrace, as we are made to

shrink from pain, and poverty, and disease. It is an instinct; and under the direction of reason, instinct is always in the right. I live in an inverted order. They who ought to have succeeded me have gone before me. They who should have been to me as posterity are in the place of ancestors. I owe to the dearest relation (which ever must subsist in memory) that act of piety, which he would have performed to me; I owe it to him to show that he was not descended, as the Duke of Bedford would have it, from an unworthy parent.—*Letter to a Noble Lord.* 1796.

CHAPTER VIII.

MISCELLANEOUS SUBJECTS.

. Truths serene
 Made visible in beauty, that shall glow
 In everlasting freshness.

TALFOURD.

LIBERTY AND THE SOCIAL RELATIONS OF MANKIND.

TRUE LIBERTY.—The effects of the incapacity shown by the popular leaders in all the great members of the commonwealth are to be covered with the “all-atoning name” of liberty. In some people I see great liberty indeed; in many, if not in the most, an oppressive, degrading servitude. But what is liberty without wisdom and without virtue? It is the greatest of all possible evils; for it is folly, vice, and madness, without tuition or restraint. Those who know what virtuous liberty is, cannot bear to see it disgraced by incapable heads, on account of their having high-sounding words in their mouths. Grand, swelling sentiments of liberty I am sure I do not despise. They warm the heart; they enlarge and liberalise our minds; they animate our courage in a time of conflict. Old as I am, I read the fine raptures of Lucan and Corneille with pleasure. Neither do I wholly condemn the little arts and devices of popularity. They facilitate the carrying of many points of moment; they keep the people to-

gether ; they refresh the mind in its exertions ; and they diffuse occasional gaiety over the severe brow of moral freedom. Every politician ought to sacrifice to the graces ; and to join compliance with reason. But in such an undertaking as that in France, all these subsidiary sentiments and artifices are of little avail. To make a government requires no great prudence. Settle the seat of power, teach obedience, and the work is done. To give freedom is still more easy. It is not necessary to guide ; it only requires to let go the rein. But to form a *free government*, that is, to temper together these opposite elements of liberty and restraint in one consistent work, requires much thought, deep reflection, a sagacious, powerful, and combining mind. This I do not find in those who take the lead in the National Assembly. Perhaps they are not so miserably deficient as they appear. I rather believe it. It would put them below the common level of human understanding. But when the leaders choose to make themselves bidders at an auction of popularity, their talents, in the construction of the state, will be of no service. They will become flatterers instead of legislators ; the instruments, not the guides, of the people. If any of them should happen to propose a scheme of liberty, soberly limited, and defined with proper qualifications, he will be immediately outbid by his competitors, who will produce something more splendidly popular. Suspicions will be raised of his fidelity to his cause. Moderation will be stigmatised as the virtue of cowards ; and compromise as the prudence of traitors ; until, in hopes of preserving the credit which may enable him to temper, and moderate, on some occasions, the popular leader is obliged to become

active in propagating doctrines, and establishing powers, that will afterwards defeat any sober purpose at which he ultimately might have aimed.

A brave people will certainly prefer liberty accompanied with a virtuous poverty to a depraved and wealthy servitude. But before the price of comfort and opulence is paid, one ought to be pretty sure it is real liberty which is purchased, and that she is to be purchased at no other price. I shall always, however, consider that liberty as very equivocal in her appearance, which has not wisdom and justice for her companions; and does not lead prosperity and plenty in her train.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

THE RIGHTS OF MAN.—Far am I from denying in theory, full as far is my heart from withholding in practice, (if I were of power to give or to withhold), the *real* rights of men. In denying their false claims of right, I do not mean to injure those which are real, and are such as their pretended rights would totally destroy. If civil society be made for the advantage of man, all the advantages for which it is made become his right. It is an institution of beneficence; and law itself is only beneficence acting by a rule. Men have a right to live by that rule; they have a right to do justice; as between their fellows, whether their fellows are in politic function or in ordinary occupation. They have a right to the fruits of their industry; and to the means of making their industry fruitful. They have a right to the acquisitions of their parents; to the nourishment and improvement of their offspring; to instruction in life, and to consolation in death. Whatever each man can separately do, without trespassing upon others, he has a right to do for himself; and he has a right

to a fair portion of all which society, with all its combinations of skill and force, can do in his favour. In this partnership all men have equal rights; but not to equal things. He that has but five shillings in the partnership, has as good a right to it, as he that has five hundred pounds has to his larger proportion. But he has not a right to an equal dividend in the product of the joint stock; and as to the share of power, authority, and direction which each individual ought to have in the management of the state, that I must deny to be amongst the direct original rights of man in civil society; for I have in my contemplation the civil social man, and no other. It is a thing to be settled by convention.

If civil society be the offspring of convention, that convention must be its law. That convention must limit and modify all the descriptions of constitution which are formed under it. Every sort of legislature, judicial, or executory power, are its creatures. They can have no being in any other state of things; and how can any man claim, under the conventions of civil society, rights which do not so much as suppose its existence? Rights which are absolutely repugnant to it? One of the first motives to civil society, and which becomes one of its fundamental rules, is, *that no man should be judge in his own cause.* By this each person has at once divested himself of the first fundamental right of uncovenanted man, that is, to judge for himself, and to assert his own cause. He abdicates all right to be his own governor. He inclusively, in a great measure, abandons the right of self-defence; the first law of nature. Men cannot enjoy the rights of an uncivil and of a civil state together. That he may obtain justice, he gives

up his right of determining, what it is in points the most essential to him. That he may secure some liberty, he makes a surrender in trust of the whole of it.

Government is not made in virtue of natural rights, which may and do exist in total independence of it; and exist in much greater clearness, and in a much greater degree of abstract perfection; but their abstract perfection is their practical defect. By having a right to everything they want everything. Government is a contrivance of human wisdom to provide for human *wants*. Men have a right that these wants should be provided for by this wisdom. Among these wants is to be reckoned the want, out of civil society, of a sufficient restraint upon their passions. Society requires not only that the passions of individuals should be subjected, but that even in the mass and body, as well as in the individuals, the inclinations of men should frequently be thwarted, their will controlled, and their passions brought into subjection. This can only be done *by a power out of themselves*; and not, in the exercise of its function, subject to that will and to those passions which it is its office to bridle and subdue. In this sense the restraints on men, as well as their liberties, are to be reckoned among their rights. But as the liberties and the restrictions vary with times and circumstances, and admit of infinite modifications, they cannot be settled upon any abstract rule; and nothing is so foolish as to discuss them upon that principle.

The moment you abate anything from the full rights of men, each to govern himself, and suffer any artificial, positive limitation upon those rights, from that moment the whole organisation of government

becomes a consideration of convenience. This it is which makes the constitution of a state, and the due distribution of its powers, a matter of the most delicate and complicated skill. It requires a deep knowledge of human nature and human necessities, and of the things which facilitate or obstruct the various ends, which are to be pursued by the mechanism of civil institutions. The state is to have recruits to its strength, and remedies to its distempers. What is the use of discussing a man's abstract right to food or medicine? The question is upon the method of procuring and administering them. In that deliberation I shall always advise to call in the aid of the farmer and the physician, rather than the professor of metaphysics.

The science of constructing a commonwealth, or renovating it, or reforming it, is, like every other experimental science, not to be taught *à priori*. Nor is it a short experience that can instruct us in that practical science; because the real effects of moral causes are not always immediate; but that which in the first instance is prejudicial may be excellent in its remoter operation; and its excellence may arise even from the ill effects it produces in the beginning. The reverse also happens; and very plausible schemes, with very pleasing commencements, have often shameful and lamentable conclusions. In states there are often some obscure and most latent causes, things which appear at first view of little moment, on which a very great part of its prosperity or adversity may most essentially depend. The science of government being therefore so practical in itself, and intended for such practical purposes, a matter which requires experience, and even more experience than any per-

son can gain in his whole life, however sagacious and observing he may be, it is with infinite caution that any man ought to venture upon pulling down an edifice, which has answered in any tolerable degree for ages the common purpose of society, or on building it up again, without having models and patterns of approved utility before his eyes.

These metaphysic rights entering into common life, like rays of light which pierce into a dense medium, are, by the laws of nature, refracted from their straight line. Indeed, in the gross and complicated mass of human passions and concerns, the primitive rights of men undergo such a variety of refractions and reflections, that it becomes absurd to talk of them as if they continued in the simplicity of their original direction. The nature of man is intricate; the objects of society are of the greatest possible complexity: and therefore no simple disposition or direction of power can be suitable either to man's nature, or to the quality of his affairs. When I hear the simplicity of contrivance aimed at and boasted of in any new political constitutions, I am at no loss to decide that the artificers are grossly ignorant of their trade, or totally negligent of their duty. The simple governments are fundamentally defective, to say no worse of them. If you were to contemplate society in but one point of view, all these simple modes of polity are infinitely captivating. In effect each would answer its single end much more perfectly than the more complex is able to attain all its complex purposes. But it is better that the whole should be imperfectly and anomalously answered, than that, while some parts are provided for with great exactness, others might be

totally neglected, or perhaps materially injured, by the over-care of a favourite member.

The pretended rights of these theorists are all extremes: and in proportion as they are metaphysically true, they are morally and politically false. The rights of men are in a sort of *middle*, incapable of definition, but not impossible to be discerned. The rights of men in governments are their advantages; and these are often in balances between differences of good; in compromises sometimes between good and evil, and sometimes between evil and evil. Political reason is a computing principle; adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing, morally and not metaphysically or mathematically, true moral denominations.

By these theorists the right of the people is almost always sophistically confounded with their power. The body of the community, whenever it can come to act, can meet with no effectual resistance; but till power and right are the same, the whole body of them has no right inconsistent with virtue, and the first of all virtues, prudence. — *Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

CIVIL SOCIETY.—I cannot too often recommend it to the serious consideration of all men, who think civil society to be within the province of moral jurisdiction, that if we owe to it any duty, it is not subject to our will. Duties are not voluntarily. Duty and will are even contradictory terms. Now though civil society might be at first a voluntary act, (which in many cases it undoubtedly was,) its continuance is under a permanent, standing covenant, co-existing with the society; and it attaches upon every individual of that society, without any formal act of his

own. This is warranted by the general practice, arising out of the general sense of mankind. Men without their choice derive benefits from that association; without their choice they are subjected to duties in consequence of these benefits; and without their choice they enter into a virtual obligation as binding as any that is actual. Look through the whole of life and the whole system of duties. Much the strongest moral obligations are such as were never the results of our option. I allow, that if no supreme ruler exists, wise to form, and potent to enforce, the moral law, there is no sanction to any contract, virtual or even actual, against the will of prevalent power. On that hypothesis, let any set of men be strong enough to set their duties at defiance, and they cease to be duties any longer. We have but this one appeal against irresistible power——

*Si genus humanum et mortalia temnitis arma,
At sperate Deos memores fandi atque nefandi.*

Taking it for granted that I do not write to the disciples of the Parisian philosophy, I may assume, that the awful Author of our being is the Author of our place in the order of existence; and that having disposed and marshalled us by a divine tactic, not according to our will, but according to his, he has, in and by that disposition, virtually subjected us to act the part which belongs to the place assigned us. We have obligations to mankind at large, which are not in consequence of any special voluntary pact. They arise from the relation of man to man, and the relation of man to God, which relations are not matters of choice. On the contrary, the force of all the pacts which we enter into with any particular person, or number of persons amongst mankind,

depends upon those prior obligations. In some cases the subordinate relations are voluntary, in others they are necessary—but the duties are all compulsive. When we marry, the choice is voluntary, but the duties are not matter of choice. They are dictated by the nature of the situation. Dark and inscrutable are the ways by which we come into the world. The instincts which give rise to this mysterious process of nature are not of our making. But out of physical causes, unknown to us, perhaps unknowable, arise moral duties, which, as we are able perfectly to comprehend, we are bound indispensably to perform. Parents may not be consenting to their moral relation; but consenting or not, they are bound to a long train of burthensome duties towards those with whom they have never made a convention of any sort. Children are not consenting to their relation, but their relation, without their actual consent, binds them to its duties; or rather it implies their consent, because the presumed consent of every rational creature is in unison with the predisposed order of things. Men come in that manner into a community with the social state of their parents, endowed with all the benefits, loaded with all the duties of their situation. If the social ties and ligaments, spun out of those physical relations which are the elements of the commonwealth, in most cases begin, and alway continue, independently of our will, so, without any stipulation on our own part, are we bound by that relation called our country, which comprehends (as it has been well said) “all the charities of all.” Nor are we left without powerful instincts to make this duty as dear and grateful to us, as it is awful and coercive. Our

country is not a thing of mere physical locality. It consists, in a great measure, in the ancient order into which we are born. We may have the same geographical situation, but another country; as we may have the same country in another soil. The place that determines our duty to our country is a social, civil relation.

As in the abstract, it is perfectly clear, that, out of a state of civil society, majority and minority are relations which can have no existence; and that, in civil society, its own specific conventions in each corporation determine what it is that constitutes the people, so as to make their act the signification of the general will: to come to particulars, it is equally clear, that neither in France nor in England has the original, or any subsequent compact of the state, expressed or implied, constituted *a majority of men, told by the head*, to be the acting people of their several communities. And I see as little of policy or utility, as there is of right, in laying down a principle that a majority of men told by the head are to be considered as the people, and that as such their will is to be law. What policy can there be found in arrangements made in defiance of every political principle? To enable men to act with the weight and character of a people, and to answer the ends for which they are incorporated into that capacity, we must suppose them (by means immediate or consequential) to be in that state of habitual social discipline, in which the wiser, the more expert, and the more opulent conduct, and by conducting enlighten and protect, the weaker, the less knowing, and the less provided with the goods of fortune. ¶When the multitude are not under this discipline,

they can scarcely be said to be in civil society. Give once a certain constitution of things, which produces a variety of conditions and circumstances in a state, and there is in nature and reason a principle which, for their own benefit, postpones, not the interest but the judgment, of those who are *numero plures*, to those who are *virtute et honore majores*. Numbers in a state (supposing, which is not the case in France, that a state does exist) are always of consideration—but they are not the whole consideration. It is in things more serious than a play, that it may be truly said, *satis est equitem mihi plaudere*.

A true natural aristocracy is not a separate interest in the state, or separable from it. It is an essential integrant part of any large body rightly constituted. It is formed out of a class of legitimate presumptions, which, taken as generalities, must be admitted for actual truths. To be bred in a place of estimation; to see nothing low and sordid from one's infancy; to be taught to respect one's self; to be habituated to the censorial inspection of the public eye; to look early to public opinion; to stand upon such elevated ground as to be enabled to take a large view of the wide-spread and infinitely diversified combinations of men and affairs in a large society; to have leisure to read, to reflect, to converse; to be enabled to draw the court and attention of the wise and learned wherever they are to be found; to be habituated in armies, to command and to obey; to be taught to despise danger in the pursuit of honour and duty; to be formed to the greatest degree of vigilance, foresight and circumspection, in a state of things in which no fault is committed with impunity, and the slightest mistakes draw on the most ruinous conse-

quences ; to be led to a guarded and regulated conduct, from a sense that you are considered as an instructor of your fellow-citizens in their highest concerns, and that you act as a reconciler between God and man ; to be employed as an administrator of law and justice, and to be thereby amongst the first benefactors to mankind ; to be a professor of high science, or of liberal and ingenious art ; to be amongst rich traders, who from their success are presumed to have sharp and vigorous understandings, and to possess the virtues of diligence, order, constancy, and regularity, and to have cultivated an habitual regard to commutative justice ;—these are the circumstances of men, that form what I should call a *natural* aristocracy, without which there is no nation.

The state of civil society, which necessarily generates this aristocracy, is a state of nature ; and much more truly so than a savage and incoherent mode of life. For man is by nature reasonable ; and he is never perfectly in his natural state, but when he is placed where reason may be best cultivated, and most predominates. Art is man's nature. We are as much, at least, in a state of nature in formed manhood, as in immature and helpless infancy. Men, qualified in the manner I have just described, form in nature, as she operates in the common modification of society, the leading, guiding, and governing part. It is the soul to the body, without which the man does not exist. To give therefore no more importance, in the social order, to such descriptions of men, than that of so many units, is a horrible usurpation.

When great multitudes act together, under that

discipline of nature, I recognise the PEOPLE. I acknowledge something that perhaps equals, and ought always to guide, the sovereignty of convention. In all things the voice of this grand chorus of national harmony ought to have a mighty and decisive influence. But when you disturb this harmony; when you break up this beautiful order, this array of truth and nature, as well as of habit and prejudice; when you separate the common sort of men from their proper chieftains, so as to form them into an adverse army, I no longer know that venerable object called the People, in such a disbanded race of deserters and vagabonds. For a while they may be terrible indeed, but in such a manner as wild beasts are terrible. The mind owes to them no sort of submission. They are, as they have always been reputed, rebels. They may lawfully be fought with, and brought under, whenever an advantage offers. Those who attempt by outrage and violence to deprive men of any advantage which they hold under the laws, and to destroy the natural order of life, proclaim war against them.

We have read in history of that furious insurrection of the common people in France, called the *Jacquerie*; for this is not the first time that the people have been enlightened into treason, murder, and rapine. Its object was to extirpate the gentry. The *Capitain de Buche*, a famous soldier of those days, dishonoured the name of a gentleman and of a man, by taking, for their cruelties, a cruel vengeance on these deluded wretches: it was, however, his right and his duty to make war upon them, and afterwards, in moderation, to bring them to punishment for their rebellion; though in the sense of the French

Revolution, and of some of our clubs, they were the *people*; and were truly so, if you will call by that appellation *any majority of men told by the head*. . . .

Aberrations like these, whether ancient or modern, unsuccessful or prosperous, are things of passage. They furnish no argument for supposing *a multitude told by the head to be the people*. Such a multitude can have no sort of title to alter the seat of power in the society, in which it ever ought to be the obedient, and not the ruling or presiding part. What power may belong to the whole mass, in which mass the natural *aristocracy*, or what by convention is appointed to represent and strengthen it, acts in its proper place, with its proper weight, and without being subjected to violence, is a deeper question. But in that case, and with that concurrence, I should have much doubt whether any rash or desperate changes in the state, such as we have seen in France, could ever be effected.—*Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*.

REFORM.

TIMELY REFORM.—If there is any one eminent criterion, which, above all the rest, distinguishes a wise government from an administration weak and improvident, it is this:—"well to know the best time and manner of yielding what it is impossible to keep." There have been, Sir, and there are, many who choose to chicaner with their situation, rather than be instructed by it. Those gentlemen argue against every desire of reformation, upon the principles of a criminal prosecution. It is enough for them to justify their adherence to a pernicious system, that it is not of their contrivance; that it is

an inheritance of absurdity, derived to them from their ancestors; that they can make out a long and unbroken pedigree of mismanagers that have gone before them. They are proud of the antiquity of their house; and they defend their errors, as if they were defending their inheritance; afraid of derogating from their nobility; and carefully avoiding a sort of blot in their scutcheon, which they think would degrade them for ever.

It was thus that the unfortunate Charles the First defended himself on the practice of the Stuart who went before him, and of all the Tudors; his partisans might have gone to the Plantagenets. They might have found bad examples enough, both abroad and at home, that could have shown an ancient and illustrious descent. But there is a time, when men will not suffer bad things because their ancestors have suffered worse. There is a time, when the hoary head of inveterate abuse will neither draw reverence, nor obtain protection. I do most seriously put it to administration, to consider the wisdom of a timely reform. Early reformations are amicable arrangements with a friend in power; late reformations are terms imposed upon a conquered enemy: early reformations are made in cool blood: late reformations are made under a state of inflammation. In that state of things the people behold in government nothing that is respectable. They see the abuse, and they will see nothing else—they fall into the temper of a furious populace provoked at the disorder of a house of ill fame; they never attempt to correct or regulate; they go to work by the shortest way—they abate the nuisance, they pull down the house. This is my

opinion with regard to the true interests of government. But as it is the interest of government that reformation should be early, it is the interest of the people that it should be temperate.—*Speech on Economical Reform.* 1780.

MIDDLE COURSE TO BE OBSERVED IN REFORM.—But in this, as in most questions of state, there is a middle. There is something else than the mere alternative of absolute destruction, or unreformed existence. *Spartam nactus es; hanc exorna.* This is, in my opinion, a rule of profound sense, and ought never to depart from the mind of an honest reformer. I cannot conceive how any man can have brought himself to that pitch of presumption, to consider his country as nothing but *carte blanche*, upon which he may scribble whatever he pleases. A man full of warm, speculative benevolence may wish his society otherwise constituted than he finds it; but a good patriot, and a true politician, always considers how he shall make the most of the existing materials of his country. A disposition to preserve, and an ability to improve, taken together, would be my standard of a statesman. Everything else is vulgar in the conception, perilous in the execution.

There are moments in the fortune of states, when particular men are called to make improvements, by great mental exertion. In those moments, even when they seem to enjoy the confidence of their prince and country, and to be invested with full authority, they have not always apt instruments. A politician, to do great things, looks for a *power*, what our workmen call a *purchase*; and if he finds that power, in politics as in mechanics, he cannot be at a loss to apply it. . . . At once to preserve and to reform

is quite another thing. When the useful parts of an old establishment are kept, and what is superadded is to be fitted to what is retained, a vigorous mind, steady, persevering attention, various powers of comparison and combination, and the resources of an understanding fruitful in expedients, are to be exercised; they are to be exercised in a continued conflict with the combined force of opposite vices, with the obstinacy that rejects all improvement, and the levity that is fatigued and disgusted with everything of which it is in possession. But you may object—"A process of this kind is slow. It is not fit for an assembly, which glories in performing in a few months the work of ages. Such a mode of reforming, possibly, might take up many years." Without question it might; and it ought. It is one of the excellences of a method in which time is amongst the assistants, that its operation is slow, and in some cases almost imperceptible. If circumspection and caution are a part of wisdom, when we work only upon inanimate matter, surely they become a part of duty too, when the subject of our demolition and construction is not brick and timber, but sentient beings, by the sudden alteration of whose state, condition, and habits, multitudes may be rendered miserable. But it seems as if it were the prevalent opinion in Paris, that an unfeeling heart, and an undoubting confidence, are the sole qualifications for a perfect legislator. Far different are my ideas of that high office. The true lawgiver ought to have a heart full of sensibility. He ought to love and respect his kind, and to fear himself. It may be allowed to his temperament to catch his ultimate object with an intuitive glance; but his movements

towards it ought to be deliberate. Political arrangement, as it is a work for social ends, is to be only wrought by social means. There mind must conspire with mind. Time is required to produce that union of minds which alone can produce all the good we aim at. Our patience will achieve more than our force. If I might venture to appeal to what is so much out of fashion in Paris, I mean to experience, I should tell you, that in my course I have known, and, according to my measure, have co-operated with great men; and I have never yet seen any plan which has not been mended by the observations of those who were much inferior in understanding to the person who took the lead in the business. By a slow but well-sustained progress, the effect of each step is watched; the good or ill success of the first gives light to us in the second; and so, from light to light, we are conducted with safety through the whole series. We see that the parts or the system do not clash. The evils latent in the most promising contrivances are provided for as they arise. One advantage is as little as possible sacrificed to another. We compensate, we reconcile, we balance. We are enabled to unite into a consistent whole the various anomalies and contending principles that are found in the minds and affairs of men. From hence arises, not an excellence in simplicity, but one far superior, an excellence in composition. Where the great interests of mankind are concerned through a long succession of generations, that succession ought to be admitted into some share in the councils which are so deeply to affect them. If justice requires this, the work itself requires the aid of more minds than one age can furnish. It is from this view of things that

the best legislators have been often satisfied with the establishment of some sure, solid, and ruling principle in government; a power like that which some of the philosophers have called a plastic nature; and having fixed the principle, they have left it afterwards to its own operation.

To proceed in this manner, that is, to proceed with a presiding principle, and a prolific energy, is with me the criterion of profound wisdom. What your politicians think the marks of a bold, hardy genius, are only proofs of a deplorable want of ability. By their violent haste, and their defiance of the process of nature, they are delivered over blindly to every projector and adventurer, to every alchemist and empiric. They despair of turning to account anything that is common. Diet is nothing in their system of remedy. The worst of it is, that this their despair of curing common distempers by regular methods, arises not only from defect of comprehension, but, I fear, from some malignity of disposition. Your legislators seem to have taken their opinions of all professions, ranks, and offices, from the declamations and buffooneries of satirists; who would themselves be astonished if they were held to the letter of their own descriptions. By listening only to these, your leaders regard all things only on the side of their vices and faults, and view those vices and faults under every colour of exaggeration. It is undoubtedly true, though it may seem paradoxical; but in general, those who are habitually employed in finding and displaying faults, are unqualified for the work of reformation: because their minds are not only unfurnished with patterns of the fair and good, but by habit they come to take no delight in the

contemplation of those things. By hating vices too much, they come to love men too little. It is therefore not wonderful, that they should be indisposed and unable to serve them. From hence arises the complexional disposition of some of your guides to pull everything in pieces. At this malicious game they display the whole of their *quadrumanous* activity. As to the rest, the paradoxes of eloquent writers, brought forth purely as a sport of fancy, to try their talents, to rouse attention and excite surprise, are taken up by these gentlemen, not in the spirit of the original authors, as means of cultivating their taste and improving their style. These paradoxes become with them serious grounds of action, upon which they proceed in regulating the most important concerns of the state. Cicero ludicrously describes Cato as endeavouring to act, in the commonwealth, upon the school paradoxes, which exercised the wits of the junior students in the Stoic philosophy. If this was true of Cato, these gentlemen copy after him in the manner of some persons who lived about his time—*pede nudo Catonem*. Mr. Hume told me that he had from Rousseau himself the secret of his principles of composition. That acute though eccentric observer, had perceived, that to strike and interest the public, the marvellous must be produced; that the marvellous of the heathen mythology had long since lost its effects; that giants, magicians, fairies, and heroes of romance which succeeded, had exhausted the portion of credulity which belonged to their age; that now nothing was left to a writer but that species of the marvellous which might still be produced, and with as great an effect as ever, though in another way; that is, the marvellous in life, in manners, in cha-

racters, and in extraordinary situations, giving rise to new and unlooked for strokes in politics and morals. I believe, that were Rousseau alive, and in one of his lucid intervals, he would be shocked at the practical frenzy of his scholars, who in their paradoxes are servile imitators, and even in their incredulity discover an implicit faith.

Men who undertake considerable things, even in a regular way, ought to give us ground to presume ability. But the physician of the state, who, not satisfied with the cure of distempers, undertakes to regenerate constitutions, ought to show uncommon powers. Some very unusual appearances of wisdom ought to display themselves on the face of the designs of those, who appeal to no practice, and who copy after no model. Has any such been manifested?

Old establishments are tried by their effects. If the people are happy, united, wealthy, and powerful, we presume the rest. We conclude that to be good from whence good is derived. In old establishments various correctives have been found for their aberrations from theory. Indeed they are the results of various necessities and expediences. They are not often constructed after any theory: theories are rather drawn from them. In them we often see the end best obtained, where the means seem not perfectly reconcileable to what we may fancy was the original scheme. The means taught by experience may be better suited to political ends than those contrived in the original project. They again re-act upon the primitive constitution, and sometimes improve the design itself, from which they seem to have departed. I think all this might be curiously exemplified in the British constitution. At worst, the errors and

deviations of every kind in reckoning are found and computed, and the ship proceeds in her course. This is the case of old establishments; but in a new and merely theoretic system, it is expected that every contrivance shall appear, on the face of it, to answer its ends; especially where the projectors are no way embarrassed with an endeavour to accommodate the new building to an old one, either in the walls or on the foundations. But one of the first and most leading principles on which the commonwealth and the laws are consecrated, is lest the temporary possessors and life-renters in it, unmindful of what they have received from their ancestors, or of what is due to their posterity, should act as if they were the entire masters; that they should not think it amongst their rights to cut off the entail, or commit waste on the inheritance, by destroying at their pleasure the whole original fabric of their society; hazarding to leave to those who come after them a ruin instead of a habitation—and teaching these successors as little to respect their contrivances, as they had themselves respected the institutions of their forefathers. By this unprincipled facility of changing the state as often, and as much, and in as many ways, as there are floating fancies or fashions, the whole chain and continuity of the commonwealth would be broken. No one generation could link with the other. Men would become little better than the flies of a summer.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.* 1790.

ENERGY AND VIGILANCE REQUISITE TO PREVENT THE SPREADING OF FACTIOUS PRINCIPLES UNDER THE GUISE OF REFORM.—There is, in all parties, between the principal leaders in parliament, and the lowest

followers out of doors, a middle sort of men; a sort of equestrian order, who, by the spirit of that middle situation, are the fittest for preventing things from running to excess. But indecision, though a vice of a totally different character, is the natural accomplice of violence. The irresolution and timidity of those who compose this middle order, often prevent the effect of their controlling situation. The fear of differing with the authority of leaders on the one hand, and of contradicting the desires of the multitude on the other, induces them to give a careless and passive assent to measures in which they never were consulted: and thus things proceed by a sort of activity of inertness, until whole bodies, leaders, middle men, and followers, are all hurried, with every appearance, and with many of the effects, of unanimity, into schemes of politics, in the substance of which no two of them were ever fully agreed, and the origin and authors of which, in this circular mode of communication, none of them find it possible to trace. In my experience I have seen much of this in affairs, which, though trifling in comparison to the present, were yet of some importance to parties; and I have known them suffer by it. The sober part give their sanction, at first through inattention and levity; at last they gave it through necessity. A violent spirit is raised, which the presiding minds, after a time, find it impracticable to stop at their pleasure, to control, to regulate, or even to direct.

This shows, in my opinion, how very quick and awakened all men ought to be, who are looked up to by the public, and who deserve that confidence, to prevent a surprise on their opinions, when dogmas are spread, and projects pursued, by which the

foundations of society may be affected. Before they listen even to moderate alterations in the government of their country, they ought to take care that principles are not propagated for that purpose, which are too big for their object. Doctrines limited in their present application, and wide in their general principles, are never meant to be confined to what they at first pretend. If I were to form a prognostic of the effect of the present machinations on the people, from their sense of any grievance they suffer under this constitution, my mind would be at ease. But there is a wide difference between the multitude, when they act against their government, from a sense of grievance, or from zeal for some opinions. When men are thoroughly possessed with that zeal, it is difficult to calculate its force. It is certain, that its power is by no means in exact proportion to its reasonableness. It must always have been discoverable by persons of reflection, but it is now obvious to the world, that a theory concerning government may become as much a cause of fanaticism as a *dogma* in religion. There is a boundary to men's passions when they act from feeling; none when they are under the influence of imagination. Remove a grievance, and, when men act from feeling, you go a great way towards quieting a commotion. But the good or bad conduct of a government, the protection men have enjoyed, or the oppression they have suffered under it, are of no sort of moment, when a faction, proceeding upon speculative grounds, is thoroughly heated against its form. When a man is, from system, furious against monarchy or episcopacy, the good conduct of the monarch or the bishop has no other effect, than further to irritate

the adversary. He is provoked at it as furnishing a plea for preserving the thing which he wishes to destroy. His mind will be heated as much by the sight of a sceptre, a mace, or a verge, as if he had been daily bruised and wounded by these symbols of authority. Mere spectacles, mere names, will become sufficient causes to stimulate the people to war and tumult.—*Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs.*

PARTY.

THE DUTY OF INTERFERING IN PARTY QUESTIONS.
—Party divisions, whether on the whole operating for good or evil, are things inseparable from free government. This is a truth which, I believe, admits little dispute, having been established by the uniform experience of all ages. The part a good citizen ought to take in these divisions has been a matter of much deeper controversy. But God forbid that any controversy relating to our essential morals should admit of no decision. It appears to me that this question, like most of the others which regard our duties in life, is to be determined by our station in it. Private men may be wholly neutral, and entirely innocent; but they who are legally invested with public trust, or stand on the high ground of rank and dignity, which is trust implied, can hardly in any case remain indifferent, without the certainty of sinking into insignificance; and thereby in effect deserting that post in which, with the fullest authority, and for the wisest purposes, the laws and institutions of their country have fixed them. However, if it be the office of those who are thus circumstanced, to take a decided part, it is no less their duty that it should be a sober one. It ought to be

circumscribed by the same laws of decorum, and balanced by the same temper, which bound and regulate all the virtues. In a word, we ought to act in party with all the moderation which does not absolutely enervate that vigour, and quench that fervency of spirit, without which the best wishes for the public good must evaporate in empty speculation.—*Observations on the Present State of the Nation.* 1769.

THE UTILITY AND NECESSITY OF POLITICAL CONNECTIONS.—That connection and faction are equivalent terms, is an opinion which has been carefully inculcated at all times by unconstitutional statesmen. The reason is evident. Whilst men are linked together, they easily and speedily communicate the alarm of any evil design. They are enabled to fathom it with common counsel, and to oppose it with united strength. Whereas, when they lie dispersed, without concert, order, or discipline, communication is uncertain, counsel difficult, and resistance impracticable. Where men are not acquainted with each other's principles, nor experienced in each other's talents, nor at all practised in their mutual habitudes and dispositions by joint efforts in business; no personal confidence, no friendship, no common interest, subsisting among them; it is evidently impossible that they can act a public part with uniformity, perseverance, or efficacy. In a connection, the most inconsiderable man, by adding to the weight of the whole, has his value, and his use; out of it, the greatest talents are wholly unserviceable to the public. No man, who is not inflamed by vain-glory into enthusiasm, can flatter himself that his single, unsupported, desultory, unsystematic endeavours, are of power to defeat the subtle designs and united

cabals of ambitious citizens. When bad men combine, the good must associate; else they will fall, one by one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle.

It is not enough, in a situation of trust in the commonwealth, that a man means well to his country; it is not enough that in his single person he never did an evil act, but always voted according to his conscience, and even harangued against every design which he apprehended to be prejudicial to the interests of his country. This innoxious and ineffectual character, that seems formed upon a plan of apology and disculpation, falls miserably short of the mark of public duty. That duty demands and requires that what is right should not only be made known, but made prevalent; that what is evil should not only be detected, but defeated. When the public man omits to put himself in a situation of doing his duty with effect, it is an omission that frustrates the purposes of his trust almost as much as if he had formally betrayed it. It is surely no very rational account of a man's life, that he has always acted right; but has taken special care to act in such a manner that his endeavours could not possibly be productive of any consequence.

I do not wonder that the behaviour of many parties should have made persons of tender and scrupulous virtue somewhat out of humour with all sorts of connection in politics. I admit that people frequently acquire in such confederacies a narrow, bigotted, and proscriptive spirit; that they are apt to sink the idea of the general good in this circumscribed and partial interest. But, where duty renders a critical situation a necessary one, it is our business to keep free from

the evils attendant upon it, and not fly from the situation itself. If a fortress is seated in an unwholesome air, an officer of the garrison is obliged to be attentive to his health, but he must not desert his station. Every profession, not excepting the glorious one of a soldier, or the sacred one of a priest, is liable to its own particular vices; which, however, form no argument against those ways of life; nor are the vices themselves inevitable to every individual in those professions. Of such a nature are connections in politics; essentially necessary for the full performance of our public duty, accidentally liable to degenerate into faction. Commonwealths are made of families, free commonwealths of parties also; and we may as well affirm, that our natural regards and ties of blood tend inevitably to make men bad citizens, as that the bonds of our party weaken those by which we are held to our country.

Some legislators went so far as to make neutrality in party a crime against the state. I do not know whether this might not have been rather to overstrain the principle. Certain it is, the best patriots in the greatest commonwealths have always commended and promoted such connections. *Idem sentire de republica*, was with them a principal ground of friendship and attachment; nor do I know any other capable of forming firmer, dearer, more pleasing, more honourable, and more virtuous habitudes. The Romans carried this principle a great way. Even the holding of offices together, the disposition of which arose from chance, not selection, gave rise to a relation which continued for life. It was called *necessitudo sortis*; and it was looked upon with a sacred reverence. Breaches of any of these kinds of civil

relation were considered as acts of the most distinguished turpitude. The whole people was distributed into political societies, in which they acted in support of such interests in the state as they severally affected. For it was then thought no crime to endeavour by every honest means to advance to superiority and power those of your own sentiments and opinions. This wise people was far from imagining that those connections had no tie, and obliged to no duty; but that men might quit them without shame, upon every call of interest. They believed private honour to be the great foundation of public trust; that friendship was no mean step towards patriotism; that he who, in the common intercourse of life, showed he regarded somebody besides himself, when he came to act in a public situation, might probably consult some other interest than his own. Never may we become *plus sages que les sages*, as the French comedian has happily expressed it, wiser than all the wise and good men who had lived before us. It was their wish to see public and private virtues, not dissonant and jarring, and mutually destructive, but harmoniously combined, growing out of one another in a noble and orderly gradation, reciprocally supporting and supported. In one of the most fortunate periods of our history this country was governed by a *connection*; I mean the great connection of Whigs in the reign of Queen Anne. They were complimented upon the principle of this connection by a poet who was in high esteem with them. Addison, who knew their sentiments, could not praise them for what they considered as no proper subject of commendation. As a poet who knew his business, he could not applaud them for a thing which in general

estimation was not highly reputable. Addressing himself to Britain,

Thy favourites grow not up by fortune's sport,
 Or from the crimes or follies of a court.
 On the firm basis of desert they rise,
 From long-try'd faith, and friendship's holy ties.

The Whigs of those days believed that the only proper method of rising into power was through hard essays of practised friendship and experimented fidelity. At that time it was not imagined that patriotism was a bloody idol, which required the sacrifice of children and parents, or dearest connections in private life, and of all the virtues that rise from those relations. They were not of that ingenious paradoxical morality, to imagine that a spirit of moderation was properly shown in patiently bearing the sufferings of your friends; or that disinterestedness was clearly manifested at the expense of other people's fortune. They believed that no men could act with effect, who did not act in concert; that no men could act in concert, who did not act with confidence; that no men could act with confidence, who were not bound together by common opinions, common affections, and common interests.

These wise men, for such I must call Lord Sunderland, Lord Godolphin, Lord Somers, and Lord Marlborough, were too well principled in these maxims upon which the whole fabric of public strength is built, to be blown off their ground by the breath of every childish talker. They were not afraid that they should be called an ambitious Junto; or that their resolution to stand or fall together should, by placemen, be interpreted into a scuffle for places.

Party is a body of men united, for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed. For my part, I find it impossible to conceive, that any one believes in his own politics, or thinks them to be of any weight, who refuses to adopt the means of having them reduced into practice. It is the business of the speculative philosopher to mark the proper ends of government. It is the business of the politician, who is the philosopher in action, to find out proper means towards those ends, and to employ them with effect. Therefore every honourable connection will avow it is their first purpose, to pursue every just method to put the men who hold their opinions into such a condition as may enable them to carry their common plans into execution, with all the power and authority of the state. As this power is attached to certain situations, it is their duty to contend for these situations. Without a proscription of others, they are bound to give to their own party the preference in all things; and by no means, for private considerations, to accept any offers of power in which the whole body is not included; nor to suffer themselves to be led, or to be controlled, or to be overbalanced, in office or in council, by those who contradict the very fundamental principles on which their party is formed, and even those upon which every fair connection must stand. Such a generous contention for power, on such manly and honourable maxims, will easily be distinguished from the mean and interested struggle for place and emolument. The very style of such persons will serve to discriminate them from those numberless impostors, who have deluded

the ignorant with professions incompatible with human practice, and have afterwards incensed them by practices below the level of vulgar rectitude.

It is an advantage to all narrow wisdom and narrow morals, that their maxims have a plausible air; and, on a cursory view, appear equal to first principles. They are light and portable. They are as current as copper coin; and about as valuable. They serve equally the first capacities and the lowest; and they are, at least, as useful to the worst men as to the best. Of this stamp is the cant of *Not men but measures*; a sort of charm by which many people get loose from every honourable engagement. When I see a man acting this desultory and disconnected part, with as much detriment to his own fortune as prejudice to the cause of any party, I am not persuaded that he is right; but I am ready to believe he is in earnest. I respect virtue in all its situations; even when it is found in the unsuitable company of weakness. I lament to see qualities, rare and valuable, squandered away without any public utility. But when a gentleman with great visible emoluments abandons the party in which he has long acted, and tells you it is because he proceeds upon his own judgment; that he acts on the merits of the several measures as they arise; and that he is obliged to follow his own conscience, and not that of others; he gives reasons which it is impossible to controvert, and discovers a character which it is impossible to mistake. What shall we think of him who never differed from a certain set of men until the moment they lost their power, and who never agreed with them in a single instance afterwards? Would not such a coincidence of interest and opinion be rather fortu-

nate? Would it not be an extraordinary cast upon the dice, that a man's connections should degenerate into faction, precisely at the critical moment when they lose their power, or he accepts a place? When people desert their connections, the desertion is a manifest *fact*, upon which a direct simple issue lies, triable by plain men. Whether a *measure* of government be right or wrong, *is no matter of fact*, but a mere affair of opinion, on which men may, as they do, dispute and wrangle without end. But whether the individual *thinks* the measure right or wrong, is a point at still a greater distance from the reach of all human decision. It is therefore very convenient to politicians, not to put the judgment of their conduct on overt-acts, cognisable in any ordinary court, but upon such matter as can be triable only in that secret tribunal, where they are sure of being heard with favour, or where at worst the sentence will be only private whipping.

I believe the reader would wish to find no substance in a doctrine which has a tendency to destroy all test of character as deduced from conduct. He will therefore excuse my adding something more, towards the further clearing up a point, which the great convenience of obscurity to dishonesty has been able to cover with some degree of darkness and doubt.

In order to throw an odium on political connection, these politicians suppose it a necessary incident to it, that you are blindly to follow the opinions of your party, when in direct opposition to your own clear ideas; a degree of servitude that no worthy man could bear the thought of submitting to; and such as, I believe, no connections (except

some court factions) ever could be so senselessly tyrannical as to impose. Men thinking freely, will, in particular instances, think differently. But still, as the greater part of the measures which arise in the course of public business are related to, or dependent on, some great, *leading, general principles in government*, a man must be peculiarly unfortunate in the choice of his political company if he does not agree with them at least nine times in ten. If he does not concur in these general principles upon which the party is founded, and which necessarily draw on a concurrence in their application, he ought from the beginning to have chosen some other, more conformable to his opinions. When the question is in its nature doubtful, or not very material, the modesty which becomes an individual, and (in spite of our court moralists) that partiality which becomes a well-chosen friendship, will frequently bring on an acquiescence in the general sentiment. Thus the disagreement will naturally be rare; it will be only enough to indulge freedom, without violating concord, or disturbing arrangement. And this is all that ever was required for a character of the greatest uniformity and steadiness in connection. How men can proceed without any connection at all, is to me utterly incomprehensible. Of what sort of materials must that man be made, how must he be tempered and put together, who can sit whole years in parliament, with five hundred and fifty of his fellow citizens, amidst the storm of such tempestuous passions, in the sharp conflict of so many wits, and tempers, and characters, in the agitation of such mighty questions, in the discussion of such vast and ponderous interests, without seeing any one sort of

men, whose character, conduct, or disposition, would lead him to associate himself with them, to aid and be aided, in any one system of public utility?

I remember an old scholastic aphorism, which says, "that the man who lives wholly detached from others, must be either an angel or a devil." When I see in any of these detached gentlemen of our times the angelic purity, power, and beneficence, I shall admit them to be angels. In the mean time we are born only to be men. We shall do enough if we form ourselves to be good ones. It is therefore our business carefully to cultivate in our minds, to rear to the most perfect vigour and maturity, every sort of generous and honest feeling that belongs to our nature. To bring the dispositions that are lovely in private life into the service and conduct of the commonwealth; so to be patriots, as not to forget we are gentlemen. To cultivate friendships, and to incur enmities. To have both strong, but both selected: in the one, to be placable; in the other, immoveable. To model our principles to our duties and our situation. To be fully persuaded, that all virtue which is impracticable is spurious; and rather to run the risk of falling into faults in a course which leads us to act with effect and energy, than to loiter out our days without blame and without use. Public life is a situation of power and energy; he trespasses against his duty who sleeps upon his watch, as well as he that goes over to the enemy.—*Thoughts on the Cause of the present Discontents.* 1770.

PERPETUAL EXISTENCE OF PARTIES IN THE STATE.

—The kingdom is divided into parties, and it ever has been so divided, and it ever will be so divided; and if no system for relieving the subjects of this

kingdom from oppression, and snatching its affairs from ruin, can be adopted until it is demonstrated that no party can derive an advantage from it, no good can ever be done in this country.—*Speech on Mr. Fox's East India Bill.* 1783.

TAXATION.

FACILITY OF UNWISE TAXATION.—Taxing is an easy business. Any projector can contrive new impositions; any bungler can add to the old. But is it altogether wise to have no other bounds to your impositions, than the patience of those who are to bear them?—*Speech on Economical Reform.* 1780.

PROPERTY TAX.—Sir, the plan I speak of was the tax of 25 *per cent.* moved upon places and pensions during the continuance of the American war.—Nothing, Sir, could have met my ideas more than such a tax if it was considered as a practical satire on that war, and as a penalty upon those who led us into it; but in any other view it appeared to me very liable to objections. I considered the scheme as neither substantial, nor permanent, nor systematical, nor likely to be a corrective of evil influence. I have always thought employments a very proper subject of regulation, but a very ill-chosen subject for a tax. An equal tax upon property is reasonable; because the object is of the same quality throughout. The species is the same, it differs only in its quantity: but a tax upon salaries is totally of a different nature; there can be no equality, and consequently no justice, in taxing them by the hundred in the gross.—*Speech on Economical Reform.* 1780.

THE DUTIES OF A FINANCIER.—The objects of a financier are, then, to secure an ample revenue; to

impose it with judgment and equality; to employ it economically; and, when necessity obliges him to make use of credit, to secure its foundations in that instance, and for ever, by the clearness and candour of his proceedings, the exactness of his calculations, and the solidity of his funds.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

NOBILITY AND THE LAW OF PRIMOGENITURE.

NOBILITY.—All this violent cry against the nobility I take to be a mere work of art. To be honoured and even privileged by the laws, opinions, and inveterate usages of our country, growing out of the prejudice of ages, has nothing to provoke horror and indignation in any man. Even to be too tenacious of those privileges is not absolutely a crime. The strong struggle in every individual to preserve possession of what he has found to belong to him, and to distinguish him, is one of the securities against injustice and despotism implanted in our nature. It operates as an instinct to secure property, and to preserve communities in a settled state. What is there to shock in this? Nobility is a graceful ornament to the civil order. It is the Corinthian capital of polished society. *Omnes boni nobilitati semper favemus*, was the saying of a wise and good man. It is indeed one sign of a liberal and benevolent mind to incline to it with some sort of partial propensity. He feels no ennobling principle in his own heart, who wishes to level all the artificial institutions which have been adopted for giving a body to opinion, and permanence to fugitive esteem. It is a sour, malignant, envious disposition, without taste for the reality, or for any image or representa-

tion of virtue, that sees with joy the unmerited fall of what had long flourished in splendour and in honour. I do not like to see anything destroyed; any void produced in society; any ruin on the face of the land.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

THE LAW OF PRIMOGENITURE.—The power of perpetuating our property in our families is one of the most valuable and interesting circumstances belonging to it, and that which tends the most to the perpetuation of society itself. It makes our weakness subservient to our virtue; it grafts benevolence even upon avarice. The possessors of family wealth, and of the distinction which attends hereditary possession (as most concerned in it), are the natural securities for this transmission. With us the house of peers is formed upon this principle. It is wholly composed of hereditary property and hereditary distinction; and made therefore the third of the legislature; and, in the last event, the sole judge of all property in all its subdivisions. The house of commons too, though not necessarily, yet in fact, is always so composed, in the far greater part. Let those large proprietors be what they will, and they have their chance of being among the best, they are, at the very worst, the ballast in the vessel of the commonwealth. For though hereditary wealth, and the rank which goes with it, are too much idolized by creeping sycophants, and the blind, abject admirers of power, they are too rashly slighted in shallow speculations of the petulant, assuming, shortsighted coxcombs of philosophy. Some decent, regulated pre-eminence, some preference (not exclusive appropriation) given to birth, is neither unnatural,

nor unjust, nor impolitic.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

As to our law of primogeniture, which with few and inconsiderable exceptions is the standing law of all our landed inheritance, and which without question has a tendency, and I think a most happy tendency, to preserve a character of consequence, weight, and prevalent influence over others in the whole body of the landed interest, they call loudly for its destruction.—*Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs.*

THE LAW AND THE JUDGES.

JURISPRUDENCE.—First of all, the science of jurisprudence, the pride of the human intellect, which, with all its defects, redundancies, and errors, is the collected reason of ages, combining the principles of original justice with the infinite variety of human concerns.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

THE JUDGES.—In the first class I place the *judges*, as of the first importance. It is the public justice that holds the community together; the ease, therefore, and independence of the judges ought to supersede all other considerations, and they ought to be the very last to feel the necessities of the state, or to be obliged either to court or bully a minister for their right; they ought to be as *weak solicitors on their own demands*, as strenuous assertors of the rights and liberties of others. The judges are, or ought to be, of a *reserved* and retired character, and wholly unconnected with the political world.—*Speech on Economical Reform.* 1780.

THE LANDED INTEREST.

That description of property (landed property) is in its nature the firm base of every stable government; and has been so considered, by all the wisest writers of the old philosophy, from the time of the Stagyrice, who observes that the agricultural class of all others is the least inclined to sedition. We find it to have been so regarded, in the practical politics of antiquity, where they are brought more directly home to our understandings and bosoms in the history of Rome, and above all, in the writings of Cicero. The country tribes were always thought more respectable than those of the city. And if in our own history, there is any one circumstance to which, under God, are to be attributed the steady resistance, the fortunate issue, and sober settlement, of all our struggles for liberty, it is, that while the landed interest, instead of forming a separate body, as in other countries, has, at all times, been in close connection and union with the other great interests of the country, it has been spontaneously allowed to lead, and direct, and moderate, all the rest.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

NECESSITY FOR THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND'S ENCOURAGEMENT OF TOLERATION.—At the same time, that I would cut up the very root of atheism, I would respect all conscience; all conscience, that is really such, and which perhaps its very tenderness proves to be sincere. I wish to see the established church of England great and powerful; I wish to see her foundations laid low and deep, that she may crush

the giant powers of rebellious darkness; I would have her head raised up to that heaven, to which she conducts us. I would have her open wide her hospitable gates by a noble and liberal comprehension; but I would have no breaches in her wall; I would have her cherish all those who are within, and pity all those who are without; I would have her a common blessing to the world, an example, if not an instructor, to those who have not the happiness to belong to her; I would have her give a lesson of peace to mankind, that a vexed and wandering generation might be taught to seek for repose and toleration in the maternal bosom of Christian charity, and not in the harlot lap of infidelity and indifference. Nothing has driven people more into that house of seduction than the mutual hatred of Christian congregations. Long may we enjoy our church under a learned and edifying episcopacy. But episcopacy may fail, and religion exist. The most horrid and cruel blow, that can be offered to civil society, is through atheism. Do not promote diversity; when you have it, bear it; have as many sorts of religion as you find in your country; there is a reasonable worship in them all. The others, the infidels, are outlaws of the constitution; not of this country, but of the human race. They are never, never to be supported, never to be tolerated. Under the systematic attacks of these people, I see some of the props of good government already begin to fail; I see propagated principles, which will not leave to religion even a toleration. I see myself sinking every day under the attacks of these wretched people—How shall I arm myself against them? by uniting all those in affection, who are united in the belief of the great

principles of the Godhead, that made and sustain the world. They, who hold revelation, give double assurance to the country. Even the man, who does not hold revelation, yet who wishes that it were proved to him, who observes a pious silence with regard to it, such a man, though not a Christian, is governed by religious principles. Let him be tolerated in this country. Let it be but a serious religion, natural or revealed, take what you can get; cherish, blow up the slightest spark. One day it may be a pure and holy flame. By this proceeding you form an alliance, offensive and defensive, against those great ministers of darkness in the world, who are endeavouring to shake all the works of God established in order and beauty—Perhaps I am carried too far; but it is in the road into which the honourable gentleman has led me. The honourable gentleman would have us fight this confederacy of the powers of darkness with the single arm of the church of England; would have us not only fight against infidelity, but fight at the same time with all the faith in the world except our own. In the moment we make a front against the common enemy, we have to combat with all those who are the natural friends of our cause. Strong as we are, we are not equal to this. The cause of the church of England is included in that of religion, not that of religion in the church of England. I will stand up at all times for the rights of conscience, as it is such, not for its particular modes against its general principles. One may be right, another mistaken; but if I have more strength than my brother, it shall be employed to support, not oppress, his weakness; if I have more light, it shall be used to guide, not to dazzle him.—

Speech on the Bill for the Relief of Protestant Dissenters. 1773.

PAYMENT OF THE CLERGY.—There ought to be a symmetry between all the parts and orders of a state. A *poor* clergy in an *opulent* nation can have little correspondence with the body it is to instruct, and it is a disgrace to the public sentiments of religion. Such irreligious frugality is even bad economy, as the little that is given, is entirely thrown away. Such an impoverished and degraded clergy in quiet times could never execute their duty, and in time of disorder would infinitely aggravate the public confusions.—*Speech on the dormant Claims of the Church.* 1772.

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE.

DIVORCE.—The Christian religion, by confining it to the pairs, and by rendering that relation indissoluble, has by these two things done more towards the peace, happiness, settlement, and civilization of the world, than by any other part in this whole scheme of divine wisdom.

The practice of divorce, though in some countries permitted, has been discouraged in all. In the East, polygamy and divorce are in discredit; and the manners correct the laws. In Rome, whilst Rome was in its integrity, the few causes allowed for divorce amounted in effect to a prohibition. They were only three. The arbitrary was totally excluded; and accordingly some hundreds of years passed, without a single example of that kind. When manners were corrupted, the laws were relaxed; as the latter always follow the former, when they are not able to regulate them, or to vanquish them. Of this circumstance

the legislators of vice and crime were pleased to take notice, as an inducement to adopt their regulation ; holding out a hope, that the permission would as rarely be made use of. They knew the contrary to be true ; and they had taken good care, that the laws should be well seconded by the manners. Their law of divorce, like all their laws, had not for its object the relief of domestic uneasiness, but the total corruption of all morals, the total disconnection of social life.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

MARRIAGE OF MINORS.—The only question is, whether matrimony is to be taken out of the general rule, and whether the minors of both sexes, without the consent of their parents, ought to have a capacity of contracting the matrimonial, whilst they have not the capacity of contracting any other, engagement. Now it appears to me very clear, that they ought not. It is a great mistake to think, that mere *animal* propagation is the sole end of matrimony. Matrimony is instituted not only for the propagation of men, but for their nutrition, their education, their establishment ; and for the answering of all the purposes of a rational and moral being ; and it is not the duty of the community to consider alone of how many, but how useful, citizens it shall be composed.

It is most certain, that men are well qualified for propagation long before they are sufficiently qualified even by bodily strength, much less by mental prudence, and by acquired skill in trades and professions, for the maintenance of a family. Therefore to enable and authorize any man to introduce citizens into the commonwealth, before a rational security can be given, that he may provide for them, and educate them as citizens ought to be provided for

and educated, is totally incongruous with the whole order of society. Nay it is fundamentally unjust; for a man that breeds a family without competent means of maintenance, encumbers other men with his children, and disables them so far from maintaining their own. The improvident marriage of one man becomes a tax upon the orderly and regular marriage of all the rest. Therefore those laws are wisely constituted, that give a man the use of all his faculties at one time; that they may be mutually subservient, aiding and assisting to each other: that the time of his completing his bodily strength, the time of mental discretion, the time of his having learned his trade, and the time at which he has the disposition of his fortune, should be likewise the time in which he is permitted to introduce citizens into the state, and to charge the community with their maintenance. To give a man a family during his apprenticeship, whilst his very labour belongs to another; to give him a family when you do not give him a fortune to maintain it; to give him a family before he can contract any one of those engagements, without which no business can be carried on, would be to burthen the state with families without any security for their maintenance. When parents themselves marry their children, they become in some sort security to prevent the ill consequences. You have this security in parental consent; the state takes its security in the knowledge of human nature. Parents ordinarily consider little the passion of their children, and their present gratification.—*Speech on a bill for the Repeal of the Marriage Act.* 1781.

THE SLAVE TRADE.

If the African trade could be considered with regard to itself only, and as a single object, I should think the utter abolition to be, on the whole, more advisable than any scheme of regulation and reform. Rather than suffer it to continue as it is, I heartily wish it at an end. What has been lately done has been done by a popular spirit, which seldom calls for, and indeed very rarely relishes, a system made up of a great variety of parts, and which is to operate its effect in a great length of time. The people like short methods, the consequences of which they sometimes have reason to repent of. Abolition is but a single act. To prove the nature of the trade, and to expose it properly, required, indeed, a vast collection of materials, which have been laboriously collected, and compiled with great judgment. It required also much perseverance and address to excite the spirit which has been excited without doors, and which has carried it through. The greatest eloquence ever displayed in the house has been employed to second the efforts which have been made abroad. All this, however, leads but to one single resolve. When this was done, all was done. I speak of absolute and immediate abolition, the point which the first motions went to, and which is in effect still pressed; though in this session, according to order, it cannot take effect. A *remote* and a *gradual* abolition, though they may be connected, are not the same thing. The idea of the house seems to me, if I rightly comprehend it, that the two things are to be combined; that is to say, that the trade is gradually to decline, and to cease

entirely at a determinate period. To make the abolition gradual, the regulations must operate as a strong discouragement. But it is much to be feared that a trade continued and discouraged, and with a sentence of death passed upon it, will perpetuate much ill blood between those who struggle for the abolition, and those who contend for an effectual continuance.—*Letter to the Right Hon. H. Dundas.* 1792.

EXECUTIONS.

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE APPROACHING EXECUTIONS OF THE RIOTERS IN 1780.—As the number of persons convicted on account of the late unhappy tumults will probably exceed what any one's idea of vengeance or example would deliver to capital punishment, it is to be wished that the whole business, as well with regard to the number and description of those who are to suffer death, as with regard to those who shall be delivered over to lighter punishment, or wholly pardoned, should be entirely a work of reason.

It has happened frequently, in cases of this nature, that the fate of the convicts has depended more upon the accidental circumstance of their being brought earlier or later to trial, than to any steady principle of equity applied to their several cases. Without great care and sobriety, criminal justice generally begins with anger, and ends in negligence. The first that are brought forward suffer the extremity of the law, with circumstances of mitigation in their case; and, after a time, the most atrocious delinquents escape merely by the satiety of punishment.

In the business now before his Majesty, the following thoughts are humbly submitted.

If I understand the temper of the public at this moment, a very great part of the lower, and some of the middling, people of this city are in a very critical disposition, and such as ought to be managed with firmness and delicacy. In general, they rather approve than blame the principles of the rioters; though the better sort of them are afraid of the consequences of those very principles which they approve. This keeps their minds in a suspended and anxious state, which may very easily be exasperated by an injudicious severity into desperate resolutions; or by weak measures, on the part of government, it may be encouraged to the pursuit of courses, which may be of the most dangerous consequences to the public.

There is no doubt, that the approaching executions will very much determine the future conduct of those people. They ought to be such as will humble, not irritate. Nothing will make government more awful to them than to see, that it does not proceed by chance or under the influence of passion.

It is therefore proposed, that no execution should be made, until the number of persons, which government thinks fit to try, is completed. When the whole is at once under the eye, an examination ought to be made into the circumstances of every particular convict; and *six*, at the very utmost, of the fittest examples may then be selected for execution, who ought to be brought out and put to death, on one and the same day, in six different places, and in the most solemn manner that can be devised. After-

wards, great care should be taken, that their bodies may not be delivered to their friends, or to others, who may make them objects of compassion, or even veneration ; some instances of the kind have happened with regard to the bodies of those killed in the riots.

The rest of the malefactors ought to be either condemned, for larger or shorter terms, to the lighters ; houses of correction ; service in the navy ; and the like, according to the case.

This small number of executions, and all at one time, though in different places, is seriously recommended ; because it is certain, that a great havoc among criminals hardens, rather than subdues, the minds of people inclined to the same crimes ; and therefore fails of answering its purpose as an example. Men, who see their lives respected and thought of value by others, come to respect that gift of God themselves. To have compassion for oneself, or to care, more or less, for one's own life, is a lesson to be learned just as every other ; and I believe it will be found, that conspiracies have been most common and most desperate, where their punishment has been most extensive and most severe.

Besides, the least excess in this way excites a tenderness in the milder sort of people, which makes them consider government in a harsh and odious light. The sense of justice in men is overloaded and fatigued with a long series of executions, or with such a carnage at once, as rather resembles a massacre, than a sober execution of the laws. The laws thus lose their terror in the minds of the wicked, and their reverence in the minds of the virtuous.

I have ever observed, that the execution of one

man fixes the attention and excites awe ; the execution of multitudes dissipates and weakens the effect : but men reason themselves into disapprobation and disgust ; they compute more as they feel less ; and every severe act, which does not appear to be necessary, is sure to be offensive.

In selecting the criminals, a very different line ought to be followed from that recommended by the champions of the protestant association. They recommend, that the offenders for plunder ought to be punished, and the offenders from principles spared. But the contrary rule ought to be followed. The ordinary executions, of which there are enough in conscience, are for the former species of delinquents ; but such common plunderers would furnish no example in the present case, where the false or pretended principle of religion, which leads to crimes, is the very thing to be discouraged.

But the reason, which ought to make these people objects of selection for punishment, confines the selection to very few. For we must consider, that the whole nation has been, for a long time, guilty of their crime. Toleration is a new virtue in any country. It is a late ripe fruit in the best climates. We ought to recollect the poison, which, under the name of antidotes against popery, and such like mountebank titles, has been circulated from our pulpits, and from our presses, from the heads of the church of England, and the heads of the dissenters. These publications, by degrees, have tended to drive all religion from our own minds, and to fill them with nothing but a violent hatred of the religion of other people, and, of course, with a hatred of their persons ; and so, by a very natural progression, they

have led men to the destruction of their goods and houses, and to attempts upon their lives.

This delusion furnishes no reason for suffering that abominable spirit to be kept alive by inflammatory libels, or seditious assemblies, or for government's yielding to it, in the smallest degree, any point of justice, equity, or sound policy. The king certainly ought not to give up any part of his subjects to the prejudices of another. So far from it, I am clearly of opinion, that on the late occasion the Catholics ought to have been taken, more avowedly than they were, under the protection of government, as the dissenters had been on a similar occasion.

But, though we ought to protect against violence the bigotry of others, and to correct our own too, if we have any left, we ought to reflect, that an offence, which in its cause is national, ought not in its effects to be vindicated on individuals, but with a very well-tempered severity.

For my own part, I think the fire is not extinguished; on the contrary, it seems to require the attention of government more than ever; but as a part of any methodical plan for extinguishing this flame, it really seems necessary, that the execution of justice should be as steady and as cool as possible.

SOME ADDITIONAL REFLECTIONS ON THE EXECUTIONS.—The great number of sufferers seems to arise from the misfortune incident to the variety of judicatures, which have tried the crimes. It were well, if the whole had been the business of one commission; for now every trial seems as if it were a separate business, and in that light, each offence is not punished with greater severity than single offences of the kind are commonly marked: but, in reality and

fact, this unfortunate affair, though diversified in the multitude of overt acts, has been one and the same riot; and therefore the executions, so far as regards the general effect on the minds of men, will have a reference to the unity of the offence, and will appear to be much more severe, than such a riot, atrocious as it was, can well justify in government. I pray, that it may be recollected, that the chief delinquents have hitherto escaped; and very many of those, who are fallen into the hands of justice, are a poor, thoughtless set of creatures, very little aware of the nature of their offence. None of the list-makers, the assemblers of the mob, the directors and arrangers, have been convicted. The preachers of mischief remain safe, and are wicked enough not to feel for their deluded disciples; no, not at all.

I would not plead the ignorance of the law in any, even the most ignorant, as a justification; but I am sure, that, when the question is of mercy, it is a very great and powerful argument. I have all the reason in the world to believe, that they did not know their offence was capital.

There is one argument, which I beg may not be considered as brought for any invidious purpose, or meant as imputing blame anywhere, but which, I think, with candid and considerate men, will have much weight. The unfortunate delinquents were perhaps much encouraged by some remissness on the part of government itself. The absolute and entire impunity attending the same offence in Edinburgh, which was over and over again urged as an example and encouragement to these unfortunate people, might be a means of deluding them. Perhaps, too, a languor in the beginning of the riots here (which

suffered the leaders to proceed, until very many, as it were, by the contagion of a sort of fashion, were carried to these excesses) might make these people think, that there was something in the case, which induced government to wink at the irregularity of the proceedings.

The conduct and condition of the lord mayor ought, in my opinion, to be considered. His answers to Lord Beauchamp, to Mr. Malo, and to Mr. Langdale, make him appear rather an accomplice in the crimes, than guilty of negligence as a magistrate. Such an example set to the mob by the first magistrate of the city tends greatly to palliate their offence.

The license, and complete impunity too, of the publications, which from the beginning instigated the people to such actions, and, in the midst of trials and executions, still continue, does in a great degree render these creatures an object of compassion. In the Public Advertiser of this morning, there are two or three paragraphs strongly recommending such outrages; and stimulating the people to violence against the houses and persons of Roman Catholics, and even against the chapels of the foreign ministers.

I would not go so far as to adopt the maxim, *quicquid multis peccatur, inultum*; but certainly offences, committed by vast multitudes, are somewhat palliated in the *individuals*; who, when so many escape, are always looked upon rather as unlucky than criminal. All our loose ideas of justice, as it affects any individual, have in them something of comparison to the situation of others; and no systematic reasoning can wholly free us from such impressions.

Phil. de Comines says, our English civil wars were

less destructive than others ; because the cry of the conqueror always was, "Spare the common people." This principle of war should be at least as prevalent in the execution of justice. The appetite of justice is easily satisfied, and it is best nourished with the least possible blood. We may too recollect, that between capital punishment and total impunity there are many stages.

On the whole, every circumstance of mercy, and of comparative justice, does, in my opinion, plead in favour of such low, untaught, or ill-taught wretches. But, above all, the policy of government is deeply interested, that the punishments should appear *one* solemn and deliberate act, aimed not at random, and at particular offences, but done with a relation to the general spirit of the tumults ; and they ought to be nothing more than what is sufficient to mark and discountenance that spirit.

CIRCUMSTANCES FOR MERCY.

Not being principal.

Probable want of early and deliberate purposes.

Youth, } where the highest malice does not ap-
Sex, } pear.

Intoxication and levity, or mere wantonness of any kind.

HISTORY.

We do not draw the moral lessons we might from history. On the contrary, without care it may be used to vitiate our minds and to destroy our happiness. In history a great volume is unrolled for our instruction, drawing the materials of future wisdom from the past errors and infirmities of mankind. It may,

in the perversion, serve for a magazine, furnishing offensive and defensive weapons for parties in church and state, and supplying the means of keeping alive or reviving, dissensions and animosities, and adding fuel to civil fury. History consists, for the greater part, of the miseries brought upon the world by pride, ambition, avarice, revenge, lust, sedition, hypocrisy, ungoverned zeal, and all the train of disorderly appetites, which shake the public with the same

—————“troublous storms that toss
“The private state, and render life unsweet.”

These vices are the *causes* of those storms. Religion, morals, laws, prerogatives, privileges, liberties, rights of men, are the *pretexts*. The pretexts are always found in some specious appearance of a real good. You would not secure men from tyranny and sedition, by rooting out of the mind the principles to which these fraudulent pretexts apply? If you did, you would root out everything that is valuable in the human breast. As these are the pretexts, so the ordinary actors and instruments in great public evils are kings, priests, magistrates, senates, parliaments, national assemblies, judges, and captains. You would not cure the evil by resolving, that there should be no more monarchs, nor ministers of state, nor of the gospel; no interpreters of law; no general officers; no public councils. You might change the names. The things in some shape must remain. A certain *quantum* of power must always exist in the community, in some hands, and under some appellation. Wise men will apply their remedies to vices, not to names; to the causes of evil which are permanent, not to the occasional organs by which they act, and

the transitory modes in which they appear. Otherwise you will be wise historically, a fool in practice. Seldom have two ages the same fashion in their pretexts and the same modes of mischief. Wickedness is a little more inventive. Whilst you are discussing fashion, the fashion is gone by. The very same vice assumes a new body. The spirit transmigrates; and, far from losing its principle of life by the change of its appearance, it is renovated in its new organs with the fresh vigour of a juvenile activity. It walks abroad, it continues its ravages, whilst you are gibbeting the carcass, or demolishing the tomb. You are terrifying yourselves with ghosts and apparitions, whilst your house is the haunt of robbers. It is thus with all those, who, attending only to the shell and husk of history, think they are waging war with intolerance, pride, and cruelty, whilst, under colour of abhorring the ill principles of antiquated parties, they are authorizing and feeding the same odious vices in different factions, and perhaps in worse.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

Not that I derogate from the use of history. It is a great improver of the understanding, by showing both men and affairs in a great variety of views. From this source much political wisdom may be learned; that is, may be learned as habit, not as precept; and as an exercise to strengthen the mind, as furnishing materials to enlarge and enrich it, not as a repertory of cases and precedents for a lawyer; if it were, a thousand times better would it be that a statesman had never learned to read—*vellem nescirent literas.* This method turns their understanding from the object before them, and from the present exigen-

cies of the world, to comparisons with former times, of which, after all, we can know very little and very imperfectly; and our guides, the historians, who are to give us their true interpretation, are often prejudiced, often ignorant, often fonder of system than of truth. Whereas if a man with reasonably good parts and natural sagacity, and not in the leading-strings of any master, will look steadily on the business before him, without being diverted by retrospect and comparison, he may be capable of forming a reasonably good judgment of what is to be done. There are some fundamental points in which nature never changes—but they are few and obvious, and belong rather to morals than to politics. But so far as regards political matter, the human mind and human affairs are susceptible of infinite modifications, and of combinations wholly new and unlooked for.—*Remarks on the Policy of the Allies.* 1793.

MISAPPLICATION OF THE TERM "HONOURABLE."

The Chancellor of France at the opening of the states, said, in a tone of oratorical flourish, that all occupations were honourable. If he meant only, that no honest employment was disgraceful, he would not have gone beyond the truth. But in asserting, that anything is honourable, we imply some distinction in its favour. The occupation of a hair-dresser, or of a working tallow-chandler, cannot be a matter of honour to any person—to say nothing of a number of other more servile employments. Such descriptions of men ought not to suffer oppression from the state; but the state suffers oppression, if such as they, either individually or collectively, are permitted

to rule. In this you think you are combating prejudice, but you are at war with nature.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

NOISY POLITICIANS.

I have often been astonished, considering that we are divided from you (the French) but by a slender dyke of about twenty-four miles, and that the mutual intercourse between the two countries has lately been very great, to find how little you seem to know of us. I suspect that this is owing to your forming a judgment of this nation from certain publications, which do, very erroneously, if they do at all, represent the opinions and dispositions generally prevalent in England. The vanity, restlessness, petulance, and spirit of intrigue, of several petty cabals, who attempt to hide their total want of consequences in bustle and noise, and puffing, and mutual quotation of each other, makes you imagine that our contemptuous neglect of their abilities is a general mark of acquiescence in their opinions. No such thing, I assure you. Because half a dozen grasshoppers under a fern make the field ring with their importunate chink, whilst thousands of great cattle, reposed beneath the shadow of the British oak, chew the cud and are silent, pray do not imagine that those who make the noise are the only inhabitants of the field; that of course, they are many in number; or that, after all, they are other than the little, shrivelled, meagre, hopping, though loud and troublesome, insects of the hour.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

INTERFERENCE OF THE RICH IN FACTIOUS AGITATION.

Such will be the impotent condition of those men of great hereditary estates, who indeed dislike the designs that are carried on, but whose dislike is rather that of spectators, than of parties that may be concerned in the catastrophe of the piece. But riches do not in all cases secure even an inert and passive resistance. There are always, in that description, men whose fortunes, when their minds are once vitiated by passion or by evil principle, are by no means a security from their actually taking their part against the public tranquillity. We see to what low and despicable passions of all kinds many men in that class are ready to sacrifice the patrimonial estates, which might be perpetuated in their families with splendour, and with the fame of hereditary benefactors to mankind, from generation to generation. Do we not see how lightly people treat their fortunes, when under the influence of the passion of gaming? The game of ambition or resentment will be played by many of the rich and great, as desperately, and with as much blindness to the consequences, as any other game. Was he a man of no rank or fortune, who first set on foot the disturbances which have ruined France? Passion blinded him to the consequences, so far as they concerned himself; and as to the consequences with regard to others, they were no part of his consideration, nor ever will be with those who bear any resemblance to that virtuous patriot and lover of the rights of man.

There is also a time of insecurity, when interests of all sorts become objects of speculation. Then it is, that their very attachment to wealth and import-

ance will induce several persons of opulence to list themselves, and even to take a lead, with the party which they think most likely to prevail, in order to obtain to themselves consideration in some new order or disorder of things. They may be led to act in this manner, that they may secure some portion of their own property ; and perhaps to become partakers of the spoil of their own order. Those who speculate on change, always make a great number among people of rank and fortune, as well as amongst the low and the indigent.

It is the natural operation of things where there exists a crown, a court, splendid orders of knighthood, and an hereditary nobility ;—where there exists a fixed, permanent, landed gentry, continued in greatness and opulence by the law of primogeniture, and by a protection given to family settlements ;—where there exists a standing army and navy ;—where there exists a church establishment, which bestows on learning and parts an interest combined with that of religion and the state ;—in a country where such things exist, wealth, new in its acquisition, and precarious in its duration, can never rank first, nor even near the first ; though wealth has its natural weight further than it is balanced and even preponderated amongst us as amongst other nations, by artificial institutions and opinions growing out of them. At no period in the history of England have so few peers been taken out of trade or from families newly created by commerce. In no period has so small a number of noble families entered into the counting-house. I can call to mind but one in all England, and his is of near fifty years standing. Be that as it may, it appears plain to me, from my best

observation, that envy and ambition may, by art, management, and disposition, be as much excited amongst these descriptions of men in England, as in any other country; and that they are just as capable of acting a part in any great change.—*Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs.*

CONCEALMENT IN PUBLIC MATTERS.

Great difficulties in consequence of our erroneous policy, as I have said, press upon every side of us. Far from desiring to conceal, or even to palliate, the evil in the representation, I wish to lay it down as my foundation, that never greater existed. In a moment when sudden panic is apprehended, it may be wise, for a while to conceal some great public disaster, or to reveal it by degrees, until the minds of the people have time to be recollected, that their understanding may have leisure to rally, and that more steady councils may prevent their doing something desperate under the first impressions of rage or terror. But with regard to a *general* state of things, growing out of events and causes already known in the gross, there is no piety in the fraud that covers its true nature; because nothing but erroneous resolutions can be the result of false representations. Those measures, which, in common distress, might be available, in greater, are no better than playing with the evil.

I admit that reason of state will not, in many circumstances, permit the disclosure of the true ground of a public proceeding. In that case silence is manly and it is wise. It is fair to call for trust when the principle of reason itself suspends its public use. I take the distinction to be this: The ground of a

particular measure, making a part of a plan, it is rarely proper to divulge ; all the broader grounds of policy, on which the general plan is to be adopted, ought as rarely to be concealed. They, who have not the whole cause before them, call them politicians, call them people, call them what you will, are no judges. The difficulties of the case, as well as its fair side, ought to be presented. This ought to be done ; and it is all that can be done. When we have our true situation distinctly presented to us, if then we resolve, with a blind and headlong violence, to resist the admonitions of our friends, and to cast ourselves into the hands of our potent and irreconcilable foes, then, and not till then, the ministers stand acquitted before God and man, for whatever may come.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

DISTINCTION BETWEEN PARSIMONY AND ECONOMY.

It may be new to his Grace, but I beg leave to tell him, that mere parsimony is not economy. It is separable in theory from it ; and in fact it may, or it may not, be a *part* of economy, according to circumstances. Expence, and great expence, may be an essential part in true economy. If parsimony were to be considered as one of the kinds of that virtue, there is however another and a higher economy. Economy is a distributive virtue, and consists not in saving, but in selection. Parsimony requires no providence, no sagacity, no powers of combination, no comparison, no judgment. Mere instinct, and that not an instinct of the noblest kind, may produce this false economy in perfection. The other economy has larger views. It demands a discriminating judgment, and a firm, sagacious mind. It shuts one

door to impudent importunity, only to open another, and a wider, to unpresuming merit. If none but meritorious service or real talent were to be rewarded this nation has not wanted, and this nation will not want, the means of rewarding all the service it ever will receive, and encouraging all the merit it ever will produce. No state, since the foundation of society, has been impoverished by that species of profusion.—*Letter to a Noble Lord.*

ANARCHY.

It is impossible not to observe, that, in proportion as we approximate to the poisonous jaws of anarchy, the fascination grows irresistible. In proportion as we are attracted towards the focus of illegality, irreligion, and desperate enterprise, all the venomous and blighting insects of the state are awakened into life. The promise of the year is blasted, and shrivelled, and burned up before them. Our most salutary and most beautiful institutions yield nothing but dust and smut: the harvest of our law is no more than stubble. It is in the nature of these eruptive diseases in the state to sink in by fits, and re-appear. But the fuel of the malady remains; and in my opinion is not in the smallest degree mitigated in its malignity, though it waits the favourable moment of a freer communication with the source of regicide to exert and to encrease its force.

Is it that the people are changed, that the commonwealth cannot be protected by its laws? I hardly think it. On the contrary, I conceive, that these things happen because men are not changed, but remain always what they always were; they remain

what the bulk of us ever must be, when abandoned to our vulgar propensities, without guide, leader, or control ; that is, made to be full of a blind elevation in prosperity ; to despise untried dangers ; to be overpowered with unexpected reverses ; to find no clue in a labyrinth of difficulties, to get out of a present inconvenience with any risk of future ruin ; to follow and to bow to fortune ; to admire successful though wicked enterprise, and to imitate what we admire ; to condemn the government which announces danger from sacrilege and regicide, whilst they are only in their infancy and their struggle, but which finds nothing that can alarm in their adult state, and in the power and triumph of those destructive principles. In a mass we cannot be left to ourselves. We must have leaders. If none will undertake to lead us right, we shall find guides who will contrive to conduct us to shame and ruin.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

SPAIN IN 1791.

As to Spain, it is a nerveless country. It does not possess the use, it only suffers the abuse, of a nobility. For some time, and even before the settlement of the Bourbon dynasty, that body has been systematically lowered, and rendered incapable by exclusion, and for incapacity excluded from affairs. In this circle the body is in a manner annihilated—and so little means have they of any weighty exertion either to control or to support the crown, that if they at all interfere, it is only by abetting desperate and mobbish insurrections, like that at Madrid, which drove Squillace from his place. Florida Blanca is a creature of office, and has little connexion and no sympathy with that body.

As to the clergy, they are the only thing in Spain

that looks like an independent order.—*Thoughts on French Affairs.* 1791.

Spain is not a Substantive Power. She must lean on France, or on England. It is as much for the interest of Great Britain to prevent the predominancy of a French interest in that kingdom, as if Spain were a province of the Crown of Great Britain, or a state actually dependent on it; full as much so as ever Portugal was reputed to be. This is a dependency of much greater value: and its destruction, or its being carried to any other dependency, of much more serious misfortune.—*Heads for Consideration of the Present State of Affairs.*

WHIGS AND TORIES.

The Tories do universally think their power and consequence involved in the success of this American business. The clergy are astonishingly warm in it; and what the Tories are when embodied and united with their natural head, the Crown, and animated by their clergy, no man knows better than yourself. As to the Whigs, I think them far from extinct. They are, what they always were (except by the able use of opportunities), by far the weakest party in this country.—*Letter to Fox.* 1777.

WRITTEN LIBELS.

Scandals merely *oral* could *spread* little, and must *perish* soon. It is writing, it is printing, more emphatically, that imparts calumny with those eagle wings, on which, as the poet says, “immortal slanders fly.” By the press they spread, they last, they leave the sting in the wound.—*Speech on a Motion respecting Prosecutions for Libels.* 1771.

THE EFFECTS OF SYMPATHY IN THE DISTRESSES OF OTHERS.

To examine this point concerning the effect of tragedy in a proper manner, we must previously consider how we are affected by the feelings of our fellow-creatures in circumstances of real distress. I am convinced we have a degree of delight, and that no small one, in the real misfortunes and pains of others; for let the affection be what it will in appearance, if it does not make us shun such objects, if, on the contrary, it induces us to approach them, if it makes us dwell upon them, in this case I conceive we must have a delight or pleasure of some species or other in contemplating objects of this kind. Do we not read the authentic histories of scenes of this nature with as much pleasure as romances or poems, where the incidents are fictitious? The prosperity of no empire, nor the grandeur of no king, can so agreeably affect in the reading, as the ruin of the state of Macedon, and the distress of its unhappy prince. Such a catastrophe touches us in history as much as the destruction of Troy does in fable. Our delight, in cases of this kind, is very greatly heightened, if the sufferer be some excellent person who sinks under an unworthy fortune. Scipio and Cato are both virtuous characters; but we are more deeply affected by the violent death of the one, and the ruin of the great cause he adhered to, than with the deserved triumphs and uninterrupted prosperity of the other; for terror is a passion which always produces delight when it does not press too closely; and pity is a passion accompanied with pleasure, because it arises from love and social affec-

tion. Whenever we are formed by nature to any active purpose, the passion which animates us to it is attended with delight, or a pleasure of some kind, let the subject-matter be what it will; and as our Creator has designed that we should be united by the bond of sympathy, he has strengthened that bond by a proportionable delight; and there most where our sympathy is most wanted—in the distresses of others. If this passion was simply painful, we would shun with the greatest care all persons and places that could excite such a passion; as some, who are so far gone in indolence as not to endure any strong impression, actually do. But the case is widely different with the greater part of mankind; there is no spectacle we so eagerly pursue, as that of some uncommon and grievous calamity; so that whether the misfortune is before our eyes, or whether they are turned back to it in history, it always touches with delight. This is not an unmixed delight, but blended with no small uneasiness. The delight we have in such things hinders us from shunning scenes of misery; and the pain we feel prompts us to relieve ourselves in relieving those who suffer; and all this antecedent to any reasoning, by an instinct that works us to its own purposes without our concurrence.

THE EFFECTS OF TRAGEDY.—It is thus in real calamities. In imitated distresses the only difference is the pleasure resulting from the effects of imitation; for it is never so perfect, but we can perceive it is imitation, and on that principle are somewhat pleased with it. And, indeed, in some cases we derive as much or more pleasure from that source than from the thing itself. But then I imagine we shall be much mistaken, if we attribute any considerable part

of our satisfaction in tragedy to the consideration that tragedy is a deceit, and its representations no realities. The nearer it approaches the reality, and the further it removes us from all idea of fiction, the more perfect is its power. But be its power of what kind it will, it never approaches to what it represents. Choose a day on which to represent the most sublime and affecting tragedy we have; appoint the most favourite actors; spare no cost upon the scenes and decorations; unite the greatest efforts of poetry, painting, and music; and when you have collected your audience, just at the moment when their minds are erect with expectation, let it be reported that a state criminal of high rank is on the point of being executed in the adjoining square; in a moment the emptiness of the theatre would demonstrate the comparative weakness of the imitative arts, and proclaim the triumph of the real sympathy. I believe that this notion of our having a simple pain in the reality, yet a delight in the representation, arises from hence, that we do not sufficiently distinguish what we would by no means choose to do, from what we should be eager enough to see if it was once done. We delight in seeing things, which so far from doing, our heartiest wishes would be to see redressed. This noble capital, the pride of England and of Europe, I believe no man is so strangely wicked as to desire to see destroyed by a conflagration or an earthquake, though he should be removed himself to the greatest distance from the danger. But suppose such a fatal accident to have happened, what numbers from all parts would crowd to behold the ruins, and amongst them many who would have been content never to have seen London in its glory! Nor is it,

either in real or fictitious distresses, our immunity from them which produces our delight ; in my own mind I can discover nothing like it. I apprehend that this mistake is owing to a sort of sophism, by which we are frequently imposed upon ; it arises from our not distinguishing between what is indeed a necessary condition to our doing or suffering anything in general, and what is the *cause* of some particular act. If a man kills me with a sword, it is a necessary condition to this that we should have been both of us alive before the fact ; and yet it would be absurd to say, that our being both living creatures was the cause of his crime and of my death. So it is certain, that it is absolutely necessary my life should be out of any imminent hazard, before I can take a delight in the sufferings of others, real or imaginary, or indeed in anything else from any cause whatsoever. But then it is a sophism to argue from thence, that this immunity is the cause of my delight either on these or on any occasions. No one can distinguish such a cause of satisfaction in his own mind, I believe ; nay, when we do not suffer any very acute pain, nor are exposed to any imminent danger of our lives, we can feel for others whilst we suffer ourselves ; and often then most when we are softened by affliction ; we see with pity even distresses which we would accept in the place of our own.*—
Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful.

* This is an answer to the celebrated lines of Lucretius :
 Suave, mari magno, turbantibus æquora ventis,
 E terra magnum alterius spectare laborem ;
 Non quia vexari quemquam est jucunda voluptas,
 Sed quibus ipse malis careas quia cernere suave est.
 Suave etiam belli certamina magna tueri
 Per campos instructa tua sine parte pericli.

THE STUDY OF THE PASSIONS.

The more accurately we search into the human mind, the stronger traces we everywhere find of His wisdom who made it. If a discourse on the use of the parts of the body may be considered as an hymn to the Creator; the use of the passions, which are the organs of the mind, cannot be barren of praise to Him, nor unproductive to ourselves of that noble and uncommon union of science and admiration, which a contemplation of the works of infinite wisdom alone can afford to a rational mind: whilst, referring to him whatever we find of right or good or fair in ourselves, discovering his strength and wisdom even in our own weakness and imperfection, honouring them where we discover them clearly, and adoring their profundity where we are lost in our search, we may be inquisitive without impertinence, and elevated without pride; we may be admitted, if I may dare to say so, into the counsels of the Almighty by a consideration of his works. The elevation of the mind ought to be the principal end of all our studies; which if they do not in some measure effect, they are of very little service to us. But, besides this great purpose, a consideration of the rationale of our passions seems to me very necessary for all who would affect them upon solid and sure principles.—*Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful.*

THE BEAUTIFUL.

PROPORTION NOT THE CAUSE OF BEAUTY IN THE VEGETABLE CREATION.—Beauty hath usually been said to consist in certain proportions of parts. On considering the matter, I have great reason to doubt,

whether beauty be at all an idea belonging to proportion. Proportion relates almost wholly to convenience, as every idea of order seems to do; and it must therefore be considered as a creature of the understanding, rather than a primary cause acting on the senses and imagination. It is not by the force of long attention and inquiry that we find any object to be beautiful; beauty demands no assistance from our reasoning; even the will is unconcerned; the appearance of beauty as effectually causes some degree of love in us, as the application of ice or fire produces the ideas of heat or cold. . . .

Turning our eyes to the vegetable creation, we find nothing there so beautiful as flowers; but flowers are almost of every sort of shape, and of every sort of disposition; they are turned and fashioned into an infinite variety of forms; and from these forms botanists have given them their names, which are almost as various. What proportion do we discover between the stalks and the leaves of flowers, or between the leaves and the pistils? How does the slender stalk of the rose agree with the bulky head under which it bends? but the rose is a beautiful flower; and can we undertake to say that it does not owe a great deal of its beauty even to that disproportion; the rose is a large flower, yet it grows upon a small shrub; the flower of the apple is very small, and grows upon a large tree; yet the rose and the apple blossom are both beautiful, and the plants that bear them are most engagingly attired, notwithstanding this disproportion. What by general consent is allowed to be a more beautiful object than an orange-tree, flourishing at once with its leaves, its blossoms, and its fruit? but it is in vain that we search here

for any proportion between the height, the breadth, or anything else concerning the dimensions of the whole, or concerning the relation of the particular parts to each other. I grant that we may observe, in many flowers, something of a regular figure, and of a methodical disposition of the leaves. The rose has such a figure and such a disposition of its petals; but in an oblique view, when this figure is in a good measure lost, and the order of the leaves confounded, it yet retains its beauty; the rose is even more beautiful before it is full blown; in the bud; before this exact figure is formed; and this is not the only instance wherein method and exactness, the soul of proportion, are found rather prejudicial than serviceable to the cause of beauty.

PROPORTION NOT THE CAUSE OF BEAUTY IN THE HUMAN SPECIES.—And after all, how are the partisans of proportional beauty agreed amongst themselves about the proportions of the human body? Some hold it to be seven heads; some make it eight; whilst others extend it even to ten; a vast difference in such a small number of divisions! Others take other methods of estimating the proportions, and all with equal success. But are these proportions exactly the same in all handsome men? or are they at all the proportions found in beautiful women? Nobody will say that they are; yet both sexes are undoubtedly capable of beauty, and the female of the greatest; which advantage I believe will hardly be attributed to the superior exactness of proportion in the fair sex. Let us rest a moment on this point; and consider how much difference there is between the measures that prevail in many similar parts of the body, in the two sexes of this single species only. If you

assign any determinate proportions to the limbs of a man, and if you limit human beauty to these proportions, when you find a woman who differs in the make and measures of almost every part, you must conclude her not to be beautiful, in spite of the suggestions of your imagination; or, in obedience to your imagination, you must renounce your rules; you must lay by the scale and compass, and look out for some other cause of beauty. For if beauty be attached to certain measures which operate from a *principle in nature*, why should similar parts with different measures of proportion be found to have beauty, and this too in the very same species?

FITNESS NOT THE CAUSE OF BEAUTY.—It is said that the idea of utility, or of a part's being well adapted to answer its end, is the cause of beauty, or indeed beauty itself. If it were not for this opinion, it had been impossible for the doctrine of proportion to have held its ground very long; the world would be soon weary of hearing of measures which related to nothing, either of a natural principle, or of a fitness to answer some end; the idea which mankind most commonly conceive of proportion, is the suitability of means to certain ends, and, where this is not the question, very seldom trouble themselves about the effect of different measures of things. Therefore it was necessary for this theory to insist, that not only artificial but natural objects took their beauty from the fitness of the parts for their several purposes. But in framing this theory, I am apprehensive that experience was not sufficiently consulted. For, on that principle, the wedge-like snout of a swine, with its tough cartilage at the end, the little sunk eyes, and the whole make of the head, so well

adapted to its offices of digging and rooting, would be extremely beautiful. The great bag hanging to the bill of a pelican, a thing highly useful to this animal, would be likewise as beautiful in our eyes. The hedge-hog, so well-secured against all assaults by his prickly hide, and the porcupine with his missile quills, would be then considered as creatures of no small elegance. There are few animals whose parts are better contrived than those of the monkey; he has the hands of a man, joined to the springy limbs of a beast; he is admirably calculated for running, leaping, grappling, and climbing; and yet there are few animals which seem to have less beauty in the eyes of all mankind. I need say little on the trunk of the elephant, of such various usefulness, and which is so far from contributing to his beauty. How well fitted is the wolf for running and leaping! how admirably is the lion armed for battle! but will any one therefore call the elephant, the wolf, and the lion, beautiful animals? I believe nobody will think the form of a man's leg so well adapted to running, as those of a horse, a dog, a deer, and several other creatures; at least they have not that appearance; yet, I believe, a well-fashioned human leg will be allowed to far exceed all these in beauty. If the fitness of parts was what constituted the loveliness of their form, the actual employment of them would undoubtedly much augment it; but this, though it is sometimes so upon another principle, is far from being always the case. A bird on the wing is not so beautiful as when it is perched; nay, there are several of the domestic fowls which are seldom seen to fly, and which are nothing the less beautiful on that account; yet birds are so extremely different in

their form from the beast and human kinds, that you cannot, on the principle of fitness, allow them anything agreeable, but in consideration of their parts being designed for quite other purposes. I never in my life chanced to see a peacock fly; and yet before, very long before, I considered any aptitude in his form for the aerial life, I was struck with the extreme beauty which raises that bird above many of the best flying fowls in the world; though, for anything I saw, his way of living was much like that of the swine, which fed in the farm-yard along with him. The same may be said of cocks, hens, and the like; they are of the flying kind in figure; in their manner of moving not very different from men and beasts. To leave these foreign examples; if beauty in our species was annexed to use, men would be much more lovely than women; and strength and agility would be considered as the only beauties. But to call strength by the name of beauty, to have but one denomination for the qualities of a Venus and Hercules, so totally different in almost all respects, is surely a strange confusion of ideas, or abuse of words. The cause of this confusion, I imagine, proceeds from our frequently perceiving the parts of the human and other animal bodies to be at once very beautiful, and very well adapted to their purposes; and we are deceived by a sophism, which makes us take that for a cause which is only a concomitant; this is the sophism of the fly; who imagined he raised a great dust, because he stood upon the chariot that really raised it. The stomach, the lungs, the liver, as well as other parts, are incomparably well adapted to their purposes; yet they are far from having any beauty. Again, many things are very beautiful, in which it is

impossible to discern any idea of use. And I appeal to the first and most natural feeling of mankind, whether, on beholding a beautiful eye, or a well-fashioned mouth, or a well-turned leg, any ideas of their being well fitted for seeing, eating, or running, ever present themselves. What idea of use is it that flowers excite, the most beautiful part of the vegetable world? It is true, that the infinitely wise and good Creator has, of his bounty, frequently joined beauty to those things which he has made useful to us; but this does not prove that an idea of use and beauty are the same thing, or that they are any way dependent on each other.

HOW FAR THE IDEA OF BEAUTY MAY BE APPLIED TO THE QUALITIES OF THE MIND.—Nor is this remark in general less applicable to the qualities of the mind. Those virtues which cause admiration, and are of the sublimer kind, produce terror rather than love; such as fortitude, justice, wisdom, and the like. Never was any man amiable by force of these qualities. Those which engage our hearts, which impress us with a sense of loveliness, are the softer virtues; easiness of temper, compassion, kindness, and liberality; though certainly those latter are of less immediate and momentous concern to society, and of less dignity. But it is for that reason that they are so amiable. The great virtues turn principally on dangers, punishments, and troubles, and are exercised rather in preventing the worst mischiefs, than in dispensing favours; and are, therefore, not lovely, though highly venerable. The subordinate turn on reliefs, gratifications, and indulgences; and are, therefore, more lovely, though inferior in dignity. Those persons who creep into the hearts of most

people, who are chosen as the companions of their softer hours, and their reliefs from care and anxiety, are never persons of shining qualities nor strong virtues. It is rather the soft green of the soul, on which we rest our eyes that are fatigued with beholding more glaring objects. It is worth observing how we feel ourselves affected in reading the characters of Cæsar and Cato, as they are so finely drawn and contrasted in Sallust. In one, the *ignoscendo largiundo*; in the other, *nil largiundo*. In one the *miseris perfugium*; in the other *malis perniciem*. In the latter we have much to admire, much to reverence, and, perhaps, something to fear; we respect him, but we respect him at a distance. The former makes us familiar with him; we love him, and he leads us whither he pleases. To draw things closer to our first and most natural feelings, I will add a remark made upon reading this section, by an ingenious friend. The authority of a father, so useful to our well-being, and so justly venerable upon all accounts, hinders us from having that entire love for him that we have for our mothers, where the paternal authority is almost melted down into the mother's fondness and indulgence.

DELICACY.—An air of robustness and strength is very prejudicial to beauty. An appearance of *delicacy*, and even fragility, is almost essential to it. Whoever examines the vegetable or animal creation will find this observation to be founded in nature. It is not the oak, the ash, or the elm, or any of the robust trees of the forest, which we consider as beautiful; they are awful and majestic; they inspire a sort of reverence. It is the delicate myrtle, it is the orange, it is the almond, it is the jasmine, it is the vine,

which we look on as vegetable beauties. It is the flowery species, so remarkable for its weakness and momentary duration, that gives us the liveliest idea of beauty and elegance. Among animals, the greyhound is more beautiful than the mastiff; and the delicacy of a gennet, a barb, or an Arabian horse, is much more amiable than the strength and stability of some horses of war or carriage. I need here say little of the fair sex, where I believe the point will be easily allowed me. The beauty of women is considerably owing to their weakness or delicacy, and is even enhanced by their timidity, a quality of mind analogous to it. I would not here be understood to say, that weakness betraying very bad health has any share in beauty; but the ill effect of this is not because it is weakness, but because the ill state of health, which produces such weakness, alters the other conditions of beauty; the parts in such a case collapse; the bright colour, the *lumen purpureum juventæ*, is gone; and the fine variation is lost in wrinkles, sudden breaks, and right lines.

RECAPITULATION OF THE SUBJECT OF BEAUTY.—On the whole, the qualities of beauty, as they are merely sensible qualities, are the following:—First, to be comparatively small. Secondly, to be smooth. Thirdly, to have a variety in the direction of the parts; but, fourthly, to have those parts not angular, but melted, as it were, into each other. Fifthly, to be of a delicate frame, without any remarkable appearance of strength. Sixthly, to have its colours clear and bright, but not very strong and glaring. Seventhly, or if it should have any glaring colour, to have it diversified with others. These are, I believe, the properties on which beauty depends; properties that operate by nature,

and are less liable to be altered by caprice, or confounded by a diversity of tastes, than any other.

THE PHYSIOGNOMY.—The *Physiognomy* has a considerable share in beauty, especially that of our own species. The manners give a certain determination to the countenance; which, being observed to correspond pretty regularly with them, is capable of joining the effect of certain agreeable qualities of the mind to those of the body. So that to form a finished human beauty, and to give it its full influence, the face must be expressive of such gentle and amiable qualities, as correspond with the softness, smoothness, and delicacy of the outward form.

THE EYE.—I have hitherto purposely omitted to speak of the *Eye*, which has so great a share in the beauty of the animal creation, as it did not fall so easily under the foregoing heads, though in fact it is reducible to the same principles. I think, then, that the beauty of the eye consists, first, in its *clearness*; what *coloured* eye shall please most, depends a good deal on particular fancies; but none are pleased with an eye whose water (to use that term) is dull and muddy. We are pleased with the eye in this view, on the principle upon which we like diamonds, clear water, glass, and such-like transparent substances. Secondly, the motion of the eye contributes to its beauty, by continually shifting its direction; but a slow and languid motion is more beautiful than a brisk one; the latter is enlivening; the former lovely. Thirdly, with regard to the union of the eye with the neighbouring parts, it is to hold the same rule that is given of other beautiful ones; it is not to make a strong deviation from the line of the neighbouring parts; nor to verge into any exact geometrical figure. Besides all this, the eye affects, as it is expressive of

some qualities of the mind, and its principal power generally arises from this: so that what we have just said of the physiognomy is applicable here.

THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL COMPARED.—On closing this general view of Beauty, it naturally occurs that we should compare it with the Sublime; and in this comparison there appears a remarkable contrast. For sublime objects are vast in their dimensions, beautiful ones comparatively small: beauty should be smooth and polished; the great, rugged and negligent; beauty should shun the right line, yet deviate from it insensibly; the great in many cases loves the right line; and when it deviates, it often makes a strong deviation: beauty should not be obscure; the great ought to be dark and gloomy; beauty should be light and delicate; the great ought to be solid, and even massive. They are indeed ideas of a very different nature, one being founded on pain, the other on pleasure; and however they may vary afterwards from the direct nature of their causes, yet these causes keep up an eternal distinction between them, a distinction never to be forgotten by any whose business it is to affect the passions. In the infinite variety of natural combinations, we must expect to find the qualities of things the most remote imaginable from each other, united in the same object. We must expect also to find combinations of the same kind in the works of art.—*Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful.*

JOY AND GRIEF.

It must be observed, that the cessation of pleasure affects the mind three ways. If it simply ceases, after having continued a proper time, the effect is *indifference*; if it be abruptly broken off, there ensues an

uneasy sense called *disappointment*; if the object be so totally lost that there is no chance of enjoying it again, a passion arises in the mind, which is called *grief*. Now there is none of these, not even grief, which is the most violent, that I think has any resemblance to positive pain. The person who grieves, suffers his passions to grow upon him; he indulges it, he loves it: but this never happens in the case of actual pain, which no man ever willingly endured for any considerable time. That grief should be willingly endured, though far from a simply pleasing sensation, is not so difficult to be understood. It is the nature of grief to keep its object perpetually in its eye, to present it in its most pleasurable views, to repeat all the circumstances that attend it, even to the last minuteness; to go back to every particular enjoyment, to dwell upon each, and to find a thousand new perfections in all, that were not sufficiently understood before; in grief, the *pleasure* is still uppermost; and the affliction we suffer has no resemblance to absolute pain, which is always odious, and which we endeavour to shake off as soon as possible. The *Odyssey* of Homer, which abounds with so many natural and affecting images, has none more striking than those which Menelaus raises of the calamitous fate of his friends, and his own manner of feeling it. He owns, indeed, that he often gives himself some intermission from such melancholy reflections; but he observes, too, that, melancholy as they are, they give him pleasure.

ΑΛΛ' ἔμπης πάντας μὲν ὀδυρόμενος καὶ ἀχεύων,
 Πολλάκις ἐν μεγάροισι καθήμενος ἡμετέροισιν,
 Ἄλλοτε μὲν τε γόφῳ φρένα τέρπομαι, ἄλλοτε δ' αὖτε
 Παύομαι αἰψήρως δὲ κόρος κρυεροῦ γόοιο.

Hom. Od. Δ. 100.

Still in short intervals of *pleasing woe*,
 Regardful of the friendly dues I owe,
 I to the glorious dead, for ever dear,
Indulge the tribute of a *grateful tear*.

On the other hand when we recover our health, when we escape an imminent danger, is it with joy that we are affected? The sense on these occasions is far from that smooth and voluptuous satisfaction which the assured prospect of pleasure bestows. The delight which arises from the modifications of pain confesses the stock from whence it sprung, in its solid, strong, and severe nature.—*Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful*.

THEATRES.

STATE OF THE ENGLISH STAGE IN 1796.—There is much gaiety, and dissipation, and profusion, which must escape, and disappoint, all the arithmetic of political economy. But the theatres are a prominent feature. They are established through every part of the kingdom, at a cost unknown till our days. There is hardly a provincial capital, which does not possess, or which does not aspire to possess, a theatre-royal. Most of them engage, for a short time at a vast price, every actor or actress of name in the metropolis; a distinction, which, in the reign of my old friend Garrick, was confined to very few. The dresses, the scenes, the decorations of every kind, I am told, are in a new style of splendour and magnificence; whether to the advantage of our dramatic taste, upon the whole, I very much doubt. It is a show and a spectacle, not a play, that is exhibited. This is undoubtedly in the genuine manner of the Augustan age, but in a manner, which

was censured by one of the best poets and critics of that or any age:—

- - - - migravit ab aure voluptas
 Omnis ad incertos oculos, et gaudia vana :
 Quatuor aut plures aulæa premuntur in horas,
 Dum fugiunt equitum turmæ, peditumque catervæ.

—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

DRAMATIC COMPOSITION.—It is generally observed that no species of writing is so difficult as the dramatic. It must indeed appear so, were we to consider it upon one side only. It is a dialogic species of composition, which in itself requires the mastery of a complete writer with graceful spirit to support. We may add, that it must be plausible too, which necessarily requires invention of the rarest qualities of the human mind. It does not surprise us, if we were to examine the thing critically, how few good original stories there are in the world. The most celebrated borrow from each other; some are content with some new turn; some correct in addition, or embellishment. Many of the celebrated writers in that way can claim no merit. I do not think La Fontaine has one original story. And if we pursue him to those, who are originals, the Italian writers of tales and novels shall find most even of them drawing from antiquity or borrowing from the Eastern world, or adopting and decorating the little popular stories they found so current and traditionary in their country. Some of them they laid the foundation of their tale in reality. Even after all their borrowing from so many sources they are still far from opulent. How few stories of Boccace, which are tolerable, and how much more are there, which you would desire to read.

But this general difficulty is greatly increased when we come to the drama. Here a fable is essential; a fable which is to be conducted with rapidity, clearness, consistency, and surprise, without any, or certainly with very little, aid from narrative. This is the reason, that generally nothing is more dull in telling than the plot of a play. It is seldom or never a good story in itself; and in this particular, some of the greatest writers, both in ancient and modern theatres, have failed in the most miserable manner. It is well a play has still so many requisites to complete it, that, though the writer should not succeed in these particulars, and therefore should be so far from perfection, there are still enough left, in which he may please, at less expense of labour to himself, and perhaps too with more real advantage to his auditory. It is indeed very difficult happily to excite the passions, and draw the characters of men. But our nature leads us more directly to such paintings than to the invention of a story; we are imitative animals; and we are more naturally led to imitate the exertions of character and passion, than to observe and describe a series of events, and to discover those relations and dependencies in them, which will please. Nothing can be more rare than this quality. Herein, as I believe, consists the difference between the inventive and the descriptive genius. By the inventive genius, I mean the creator of agreeable facts and incidents; by the descriptive, the delineator of characters, manners, and passions. Imitation calls us to this; we are in some cases almost forced to it, and it is comparatively easy. More observe the characters of men than the order of things; to the one we are

formed by nature, and by that sympathy, from which we are so strongly led to take a part in the passions and manners of our fellow-men. The other is, as it were, foreign and extrinsical. Neither, indeed, can anything be done, even in this, without invention. But it is obvious that this invention is of a kind altogether different from the former. However, though the more sublime genius, and the greatest art, are required for the former, yet the latter, as it is more common and more easy, so it is more useful, and administers more directly to the great business of life.—*Hints for an Essay on the Drama.*

DANCING.—Those noble and majestic movements, which make part of the entertainment of the most wise, of the education of the most virtuous, which improve the manners without corrupting the morals of all civilized people, and of which, among uncivilized people, the professors have their due share of admiration.—*Speech against Warren Hastings.*

APHORISMS.

When ministry rests upon public opinion, it is not, indeed, built upon a rock of adamant; it has, however, some stability. But when it stands upon private humour, its structure is of stubble, and its foundation is on quicksand.—*Thoughts on the Cause of the present Discontents.*

It should seem to my way of conceiving such matters, that there is a very wide difference in reason and policy, between the mode of proceeding on the irregular conduct of scattered individuals, or even of bands of men, who disturb order within the state, and the civil dissensions which may, from time to time, on great questions, agitate the several com-

munities which compose a great empire. It looks to me to be narrow and pedantic, to apply the ordinary ideas of criminal justice to this great public contest. I do not know the method of drawing up an indictment against a whole people.—*Speech on Conciliation with America.*

It is by lying dormant a long time, or being at first very rarely exercised, that arbitrary power steals upon a people.—*Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.*

Civil wars strike deepest of all into the manners of the people. They vitiate their politics; they corrupt their morals; they pervert even the natural taste and relish of equity and justice. By teaching us to consider our fellow-citizens in a hostile light, the whole body of our nation becomes gradually less dear to us. The very names of affection and kindred, which were the bond of charity whilst we agreed, become new incentives to hatred and rage, when the communion of our country is dissolved.—*Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.*

Wise men often tremble at the very things which fill the thoughtless with security.—*Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.*

Calamity is unhappily the usual season of reflection; and the pride of men will not often suffer reason to have any scope until it can be no longer of service.—*Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.*

Nothing in progression can rest on its original plan. We may as well think of rocking a grown man in the cradle of an infant.—*Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.*

I know it is common for men to say, that such and such things are perfectly right—very desirable; but that, unfortunately, they are not practicable.

Oh! no, sir, no. Those things, which are not practicable, are not desirable. There is nothing in the world really beneficial, that does not lie within the reach of an informed understanding, and a well-directed pursuit. There is nothing that God has judged good for us, that he has not given us the means to accomplish, both in the natural and the moral world. If we cry, like children, for the moon, like children, we must cry on.—*Speech on Economical Reform.*

Moderate affection, and satiated enjoyment, are cold and respectful; but an ardent and injured passion is tempered up with wrath, and grief, and shame, and conscious worth, and the maddening sense of violated right. A jealous love lights his torch from the firebrands of the furies.—*Speech on Economical Reform.*

He censures God who quarrels with the imperfections of man.—*Speech at Bristol previous to the Election.*

We know, and what is better, we feel inwardly, that religion is the basis of civil society, and the source of all good and of all comfort. . . . We know, and it is our pride to know, that man is by his constitution a religious animal; that atheism is against, not only our reason, but our instincts; and that it cannot prevail long.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

I never will suppose that fabric of a state to be the worst of all political institutions, which, by experience, is found to contain a principle favourable (however latent it may) to the increase of mankind.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

Too much idleness, I have observed, fills up a man's time much more completely, and leaves him less his own master, than any sort of employment whatsoever.—*Letter to Richard Shackleton.*

The dignity of every occupation wholly depends upon the quantity and the kind of virtue that may be exerted in it.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

As soon as a nation compels a creditor to take paper currency in discharge of his debt, there is a bankruptcy.—*Thoughts on French Affairs.*

Republicanism repressed may have its use in the composition of a state.—*Remarks on the Policy of the Allies.*

Mercy is not a thing opposed to justice. It is an essential part of it; as necessary in criminal cases, as in civil affairs equity is to law.—*Remarks on the Policy of the Allies.*

If we have deserved this kind of evil fame from anything we have done in a state of prosperity, I am sure that it is not an abject conduct in adversity that can clear our reputation. Well is it known that ambition can creep as well as soar. The pride of no person in a flourishing condition is more justly to be dreaded, than that of him who is mean and cringing under a doubtful and unprosperous fortune.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

Fraud and prevarication are servile vices. They sometimes grow out of the necessities, always out of the habits, of slavish and degenerate spirits; and on the theatre of the world, it is not by assuming the mask of a Davus or a Geta that an actor will obtain credit for manly simplicity and a liberal openness of proceeding. It is an erect countenance, it is a firm adherence to principle, it is a power of resisting false shame and frivolous fear, that assert our good faith and honour, and assure to us the confidence of mankind.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

Contempt is not a thing to be despised. It may

be borne with a calm and equal mind, but no man by lifting his head high can pretend that he does not perceive the scorns that are poured down upon him from above.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

Necessity, as it has no law, so it has no shame: but moral necessity is not like metaphysical, or even physical. In that category it is a word of loose signification, and conveys different ideas to different minds. To the low-minded, the slightest necessity becomes an invincible necessity. “The slothful man saith, There is a lion in the way, and I shall be devoured in the streets.” But when the necessity pleaded is not in the nature of things, but in the vices of him who alleges it, the whining tones of commonplace beggarly rhetoric produce nothing but indignation; because they indicate a desire of keeping up a dishonourable existence, without utility to others, and without dignity to itself; because they aim at obtaining the dues of labour without industry; and by frauds would draw from the compassion of others, what men ought to owe to their own spirit and their own exertions.

I am thoroughly satisfied that if we degrade ourselves, it is the degradation which will subject us to the yoke of necessity, and not that it is necessity which has brought on our degradation.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

It is no strange thing to those, who look into the nature of corrupted man, to find a violent persecutor a perfect unbeliever of his own creed.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

Mercy, as we conceive, consists not in the weakness of the means, but in the benignity of the ends. We apprehend, that mild measures may be powerfully enforced: and that acts of extreme rigour and

injustice may be attended with as much feebleness in the execution, as severity in the formation.—

Address to the King.

Charity is the only virtue that I ever heard of, that derived from its retirement any part of its lustre; the others require to be spread abroad in the face of day. Such candles should not be hid under a bushel, and like the illuminations which men light up when they mean to express great joy and great magnificence for a great event, their very splendour is a part of their excellence.—*Speech against Warren Hastings.*

Guilt was never a rational thing; it distorts all the faculties of the mind, it perverts them, it leaves a man no longer in the free use of his reason; it puts him into confusion. . . . Men that are greatly guilty are never wise. In their defence of one crime they are sure to meet the ghost of some former defence, which, like the spectre in Virgil, drives them back.—*Speech against Warren Hastings.*

That discretion, which, in judicature, is well said by Lord Coke to be a crooked cord, in legislature is a golden rule.—*Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe.*

As to the right of men to act anywhere according to their pleasure, without any moral tie, no such right exists. Men are never in a state of *total* independence of each other. It is not the condition of our nature: nor is it conceivable how any man can pursue a considerable course of action without its having some effect upon others; or, of course, without producing some degree of responsibility for his conduct. The *situations* in which men relatively stand produce the rules and principles of that responsibility, and afford directions to prudence in exacting it.—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

EPITAPHS WRITTEN BY EDMUND BURKE.

EPITAPH ON THE MONUMENT OF THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM
DOWDESWELL, IN BUSHLEY CHURCH, WORCESTERSHIRE.

To the memory of William Dowdeswell: representative in parliament for the county of Worcester, Chancellor of the Exchequer in the years 1765 and 1766, and a member of the King's privy council: a senator for twenty years; a minister for one; a virtuous citizen for his whole life; a man of unshaken constancy, inflexible integrity, unremitting industry.

His mind was generous, open, sincere: his manners plain, simple, and noble; rejecting all sorts of duplicity and disguise, as useless to his designs and odious to his nature.

His understanding was comprehensive, steady, vigorous—made for the practical business of the state. In debate he was clear, natural, and convincing. His knowledge, in all things which concerned his duty, profound: he understood, beyond any man of his time, the revenues of his country which he preferred to everything—except its liberties.

He was a perfect master of the law of parliament; and attached to its privileges, until they were set up against the rights of the people.

All the proceedings which have weakened government, endangered freedom, and distracted the British empire, were by him strenuously opposed; and his last efforts, under which his health sunk, were to preserve his country from a civil war, which, being unable to prevent, he had not the misfortune to see.

He was not more respectable on the public scene, than amiable in private life. Immersed in the greatest affairs, he never lost the ancient, native, genuine English character of a country gentleman.

Disdaining and neglecting no office in life, he was an ancient municipal magistrate; with great care and clear judgment administering justice, maintaining the police, relieving the distresses, and regulating the manners, of the people in his neighbourhood.

A husband and father—the kindest, gentlest, most indulgent: he was everything in his family, except what he gave up to his country.

His widow, who labours with life in order to form the minds of his eleven children to the resemblance of their father, erects this monument.

INSCRIPTION ON THE PEDESTAL OF THE STATUE OF SIR GEORGE
SAVILLE, IN YORK CATHEDRAL.

To the memory of Sir George Saville, Bart., who, in five successive parliaments, represented the county of York; the public love and esteem of his fellow-citizens have decreed this monument.

His life was an ornament and blessing to the age in which he lived; and after his death his memory will continue to be beneficial to mankind, by holding forth an example of pure and unaffected virtue, most worthy of imitation, to the latest posterity.

He departed this life January the 9th, 1784, in the 58th year of his age, beloved and lamented.

In private life he was benevolent and sincere; his charities were extensive and secret; his whole heart was formed on principles of generosity, mildness, justness, and universal candour. In public, the

patron of every national improvement ; in the senate, uncorrupt ; in his commerce with the world, disinterested. By genius entitled in the means of doing good ; he was unwearied in doing it.

INSCRIPTION TO THE MARQUIS OF ROCKINGHAM, IN THE
MAUSOLEUM, NEAR WENTWORTH HOUSE, YORKSHIRE.

CHARLES, MARQUIS OF ROCKINGHAM.

A statesman in whom constancy, fidelity, sincerity, and directness, were the sole instruments of his policy. His virtues were his arts. A clear, sound, unadulterated sense, not perplexed with intricate design, or disturbed by uncontrolled passion, gave consistency, dignity, and effect to all his measures. In opposition he respected the principles of government ; in administration he provided for the liberties of the people. He employed his moments of power in realizing everything which he had promised in a popular situation. This was the distinguishing mark of his conduct. After twenty-four years of service to the public, in a critical and trying time, he left no debt of just expectation unsatisfied.

By his prudence and patience he brought together a party which it was the great object of his labours to render permanent, not as an instrument of ambition, but as a living depository of principle.

The virtues of his public and private life were not in him of different characters. It was the same feeling, benevolent, liberal mind that, in the internal relations of life, conciliates the unfeigned love of those who see men as they are, which made him an inflexible patriot. He was devoted to the cause of

liberty, not because he was haughty and intractable, but because he was beneficent and humane. Let his successors, who from this house behold this monument, reflect that their conduct will make it their glory or their reproach. Let them be persuaded that similarity of manners, not proximity of blood, gives them an interest in this statue.

REMEMBER—RESEMBLE—PERSEVERE.

A PART OF THE WILL OF EDMUND BURKE.

If my dear son and friend had survived me, any will would have been unnecessary ; but since it has pleased God to call him to himself before his father, my duty calls upon me to make such a disposition of my worldly effects as seems to my best judgment most equitable and reasonable ; therefore, I, Edmund Burke, late of the parish of St. James, Westminster, though suffering under sore and inexpressible affliction, being of sound and disposing mind, do make my last will and testament in manner following :—

First, according to the ancient, good, and laudable custom, of which my heart and understanding recognise the propriety, I bequeath my soul to God, hoping for his mercy through the only merits of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. My body I desire, if I should die in any place very convenient for its transport thither (but not otherwise), to be buried in the church, at Beaconsfield, near to the bodies of my dearest brother and my dearest son, in all humility praying that, as we have lived in perfect

unity together, we may together have a part in the resurrection of the just.

I wish my funeral to be (without any puctiliousness in that respect) the same as that of my brother, and to exceed it as little as possible in point of charge, whether on account of my family or of any others who would go to a greater expense; and I desire, in the same manner and with the same qualifications, that no monument beyond a middle-sized tablet, with a small and simple inscription on the church-wall, or on the flag-stone, be erected. I say this, because I know the partial kindness to me of some of my friends. But I have had, in my life-time, but too much of noise and compliment. . . .

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